Baynton

Charles Palmer

WANSTEAD, ESSEX.

MDCCLXXXIII.

Baynton

Charles Palmer

WANSTEAD, ESSEX.

MDCCLXXXIII.

An admonition to the Reader.

DAuid that notable king and excellēt Prophet, feeling in the course of this life, the comfort and direction of the eternall word of almightie God, professeth openly in that his Octonary Psalme these wordes. *Lucerna pedibus meis verbum tuum (O Domine) & lumen semitis meis.* Thy word (O Lord) is a lanterne to my feete, and a light vnto my pathes. Dauid well perceiuyng the corruptiō of his nature, the blindnes of his vnderstandyng, could not but acknowledge in that his long meditation, the necessitie that he espied in the Scripture of God, for where he sawe his wyt to weake to comprise the merueylous workes of God aswell in his creation, as in his redemption, (which he saw in spirit before,) could not well atteyne the life that he most ioyed in, in this trāsitory world, except his vnderstandyng should be illightened, and his whole state of life truely gouerned by the lanterne and light of Gods word. He was no phantasticall reader of his word, he ioyed not rather to be a student or a talker, then a worker, but effectually framed all his senses to sauour and knowe the will of God, and to folow the same. His spirit was altogither set to vertue, which entent whoPsal. 119. Nun.

AN EXPOSITION OF SALOMONS Booke, called Ecclesiastes or the Preacher.

☞ Seene and allowed.

AT LONDON

Printed by Iohn Daye, dwellyng ouer Aldersgate.

An. 1573.

¶ *Cum gratia & Priuilegio Regiæ Maiestatis.*

Baynton

Charles Palmer

WANSTEAD, ESSEX.

MDCCLXXXIII.

An admonition to the Reader.

DAuid that notable king and excellét Prophet, feeling in the courſe of this life, the comfort and direction of the eternall word of almightie God, profeſſeth openly in that his Octonary Pſalme theſe wordes. *Lucerna pedibus meis verbum tuum (O Domine) & lumen ſemitis meis.* Thy word (O Lord) is a lanterne to my feete, and a light vnto my pathes. Dauid well perceiuyng the corruptiõ of his nature, the blindnes of his vnderſtandyng, could not but acknowledge in that his long meditation, the neceſſitie that he eſpied in the Scripture of God, for where he ſawe his wyt to weake to compriſe the merueylous workes of God aſwell in his creation, as in his redemption, (which he ſaw in ſpirit before,) could not well atteyne the life that he moſt ioyed in, in this trãſitory world, except his vnderſtandyng ſhould be illightened, and his whole ſtate of life truely gouerned by the lanterne and light of Gods word. He was no phantaſticall reader of his word, he ioyed not rather to be a ſtudent or a talker, then a worker, but effectually framed all his ſenſes to ſauour and knowe the will of God, and to folow the ſame. His ſpirit was altogither ſet to vertue, which entent who- Pſal. 119. Nun.

soeuer doth not folow, he doth as a man by
Iames.1. the testimony of S. Iames, which delighteth to behold his naturall countenaunce in the glasse, and is not carefull so to impresse the same in his remembraunce, thereby to wype away the spottes of his face: for whosoeuer doth not thus earnestly tary in the lawe of
Iames.1. perfect libertie, he deceiueth him self, & endeth in vanitie. For it is he onely that is blessed in his act that doth persist in his law, applying the vnderstandyng therof to heale his owne infirmities, and to be able to be a light vnto others, as we haue great cause to thāke the goodnes of almighty God, for deuising of such a rule of Scripture to be lead by, and as we be bounde to magnifie almighty God by his holy spirit to rayse vp such his welbeloued seruaūtes to call vpon vs, and to bryng vs to the knowledge of hym selfe, whereby we might be thākefull: so is the daūger very great to all such as couer this his light vnder a bushell, that deteyne this precious iewell vnder vnrighteousnesse of life. The worlde was neuer more full of the certaine knowledge of God, then it is at this day, but almighty God was neuer more dishonoured then he is at this day, by many that professe by theyr knowledge to be leaders to the blind, instructours of the ignoraunt, hauyng *the fourme of right vnderstandyng* by the law of God.

Why therfore doest thou sayth S. Paule:

Teach

Teach other and teacheſt not thy ſelfe, and ſo blaſphemeſt the worde of almighty God before them that know not the power therof, whoſe condemnation (if they repent not) ſhalbe the greater. We haue much delight now a dayes to know many thynges, but litle luſt we haue to lyue after our knowledge, it is not he that heareth the worde of God that ſhall be partaker of Chriſtes bleſſing, but he that doth the word, not he that hath right vnderſtandyng of his will, but he that is earneſtly giuen to expreſſe his will in his ſecret thought betwixt God and hym ſelfe, in his wordes and deedes of lyfe to the inſtitution and example of others. It ſhal not be aſked at that dreadful day when we ſhall come to make our aunſwere to almighty God, how much we haue learned, how oft we haue read, how much we do know, but how well we haue liued, what workes we haue expreſſed to teſtifie with vs of our inwarde regeneration, of our inwarde fayth, that he might be thereby glorified. And for this intent that we ſhould be inſtructed in our true dueties to god and our neighbour, amõgeſt many workes & bookes to teach vs the ſame, none is more apt then this booke of Salomon which we haue in hand, none is more fit then this, which ſetteth out the vanitie of our corrupt affections, no author *more liuely, no writer is more apt to teach* all maner of perſons, aſwell publike as pri-

uate to rule thẽſelue a right in this miſerable vale of our corruptible lyfe, thẽ is the author of this doctrine cõteined in this booke. For whoſoeuer will endeuour hym ſelfe to apply his wyt and his vnderſtandyng to the counſell of this worke, ſhall ſoone perceyue the corruption of this world, and the vanitie of their owne nature, and in all his trauayles what ſoeuer ſtate of lyfe hee leades ſhall ſee by this lanterne, how to ſtep forth frõm fayth to fayth, frõ vertue to vertue, frõ charitie tocharitie, & in cõcluſion ſhal finde all thynges mere vayne and vanitie, nothing permanent, nothyng durable, nothyng allowable, but the knowledge of almighty God, and the feare of his holy name: to whom be all honour and glorye for euermore.

Amen.

The Preface vppon the booke of Salomon, called the Preacher.

Because this booke hath beene obscurely & darckly translated out of the Hebrew tounge, euery learned mā hath greedyly gone aboute to expoūde and declare it, eche man labouryng to fraine diuerse of the sayinges therin to his owne profession, or rather opinion whether for that their curiositie was delighted in straūge, obscure and vnwonted matters: or els for that in such obscure and darke writyngs, it is easie for a man to fayne what her phansieth and supposeth. For the Philosophers haue thought, that which Salomon sayth euen in the very begynnyng, hath appertained to them, namely, that all thynges are difficulte, man is not able to vtter them with tounge, as though Salomon ment some kinde of vayne speculation in Philosophie.

He blameth the abusing of this booke.

Some other being offended with this saying of Salomon: As the beast dyeth so dyeth the man, and they haue both one end and lyfe: haue demed that he was an Epicure, or spake in the person of the Epicures. But none haue more daungerously

misused the same, thē the Schooles of the diuines, who haue wrested this place: No man knoweth whether he be worthy of hatred or loue, to the cōscience toward God, and so much haue wrested the same, that they haue vtterly slaughtered the consciences of all mē, and put out the most certaine fayth in Christ, teachyng & beatyng into most miserable harts, nothing more deuoutly thē y we ought to doubt & to be vncertaine, of the loue, & grace of God toward vs, tyred we neuer so inculpable.

The errour of the Schoolemē in this booke.

The doctrine of doubtyng, tooke begynnyng of this booke.

So great was the darkenes more the that of Egypt, that by reason of this sayyng of Salomō, yea rather through theyr owne errours builded vpon his saying, they saw now no more the wrytynges of the Apostles and Euangelistes, which do declare by so many miracles Scriptures and Argumentes, that Christ is our mediatour, and the authour of the most vndoubted grace and saluation, that God hath prohibited and geuen freely to vs. And no lesse hurt haue diuers of the holy and notable fathers and Doctours in the Church done by misunderstādyng of the same booke, who haue thought that Salomon had taught vs herein the cōtempt of the world (as they call it) that is to say of the creatures, that God hath made and ordeined. Amongest whom S. Hierome is one which by hys Commētary wrytte vpon

The errour of holy fathers, in misunderstādyng of this booke.

vpon this booke allured his beloued Blesilla to become a Nunne. From hēce hath flowed and rūne ouer all the church lyke a flud or inundatiō all that diuinitie of ỹ religious houses or monasteries, where they taught that it was the duty of a christiane to forsake the gouernaunce of hys house, to giue vp his office, yea to leaue the Bysshoplyke or rather Apostolike ministery, to get them into the wildernes, to separate them from all company, to lyue in quyete and silence, saying that mē could not lyue in the worlde and serue God: as though Salomon counted mariage, gouernaunce of kingdoms, bearing of office & ministry of the worde vanity, all which in this booke hee meruelously extolleth & calleth ỹ gifts of God. And whereas Salomō declareth that men thē selues, or rather their cōsels & deuises, are vanities, these men peruertyng all thyngs, call the things thē selues vayne, and suppose that they & their deuises are sounde & good, smothly dreamyng all thynges contrary to Salomons meanyng. And to be short, they haue drawen vs out of this most goodly and profitable booke nothyng but monsters, and of most fine and pure gold haue made abhominable Idoles.

The begynnyng of Monkishe lyfe.

Errour of the interpretours.

Wherefore the rather to discouer this darkenes, and to abolish these filthy Idoles, I haue suffered these annotations

of

of myne, noted and written, by other as I spake them, and framed after this order of speach, (for my selfe by reason of much businesse could write no sufficient and full Commentary vpon the booke) to be published. which annotations albeit they are but slender and litle, yet may they to them that haue no better, or which haue been seduced heretofore with false gloses (as I haue been) geue occasion as vnto wise men, to become the better and finde out and deuise better matter. Surely a very small tast of this booke was to me a great pleasure, after I was wery̌ed in the same all my lyfe long, and had in vayne vexed and corrupted my selfe, with wicked opinions agaynst the fayth in Christ. wherfore I giue most harty thankes, to ỹ father of mercies, which hath renewed this latter age with so many reuelations and so great light.

The title of this booke.

Therfore we will more aptely call this booke of the Preacher, the politikes, or Oeconomikes of Salomon, (not for ỹ he giueth any rules or preceptes how to gouerne any Cities, or to rule any families (for that doth the law of nature or reason of man abundantly perfourme. wher unto all thynges in the world are subiect. Gen. 1. which hath bene alway the fountaine, Iudge and end, & must so remaine of all lawes aswell ciuile as domesticall) but

but for that it giueth counsell to men in aduersitie whether they be publike or priuate persons, instructyng their myndes & strengthenyng them to patience, by bearyng of misfortunes which many wayes fall out in such cases, as the bookes of the holy hystories and all Poetes fables do declare, such as are Hercules trauelles, the monsters that Vlisses & others ouercame, the Beare, the Lió, and Goliath that Dauid vanquished. He that in these pointes is ignorannt, at length falleth downe being tyred, and great is his fall, as was the fall of Timon, Demosthenes, Cicero, and diuerse lyke. Through the unpatiencie hereof hane heretikes also styred vp sects in ỹ Church because such was the naughtynes of men, that they forsooke their ministery. As it is commonly sayd Desperation maketh Monkes. For it is true that the wise mã sayth: Office and authoritie sheweth what a man is. But in deede, onles we haue some Salomon to exhorte and comforte vs, office and authoritie, ouerwhelmeth, casteth downe, and vndoth a man. He meaneth Plato.

I commende therfore to the godly brethren this my Salomon, rather pointed at, and but touched, then fully declared. And I wish that some good and learned man of a more abundaunt spirit, and happyer wayne then I am would stand vp, expound and beautifie this booke according

to

to the worthynes therof, to the prayse of God and commendation of his creatures, to whom be glory for euer, through Iesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Argument vpon Salomons booke called the Preacher.

The obscuritie or hardnes of this booke.

THis booke is one of the most difficules bookes of the whole Scripture, whiche no man hath hetherto fully attayned vnto, yea it hath been depraued with the vnworthy commentaryes of diuerse men: in so much that it is a more trouble to purge ỹ author therof from the dreames wherewith they haue defaced it, then to restore the true sense therof agayn.

Two causes why it is so obscure.

And two causes there haue been, why it hath been more hard to vnderstand then other. One was, for that they perceaued not the intent and meanyng of the author, which thyng as in euery kynde of writyng, so chiefly in this, and in all others, it had been requisite, they had kept and followed. The other was by reason they were ignorant in the Hebrew toung, & in the auctors peculiar phrase, whiche many tymes swarueth from the common phrase of speach, and differeth much from the custome of our tounge. Hereby

The vse of this booke.

it came to passe, that the booke which for many causes was worthy to be had in all mēs hādes, and specially to be knowen to all gouernours of common weales (for it was most liuely set forth and in no place like, the administration of affaires aswell publike as priuate) hath hetherto been depriued of his name and dignitie, miserably vnregarded and neglected, so that to this day, we haue had neither vse nor commoditie of

it.

it. So much hath the rashnes and ignorauncē of some men been able to do. wherfore our first labour shalbe to hold fast the certeine scope & intēt of the booke, what it requireth and whereto it tendeth. For if we hereof be ignorauntt, it shall be impossible to vnderstand the style and phrase in the same.

The meaning therefore and summe of thys booke is, that Salomon wyll haue vs to be quieted and setled in our mynde, that in all occurrēces and chaunces of thys lyfe, we should liue cōtented wyth our present estate, wythout care & desire of thynges to come, as Paul sayth: liuing wythout carefulnes, because vayne is the desire of future thynges. Salomon gathereth by a certayne perpetuall and cōtynued induction of particular thynges, that mens deuises and enterprises are frustrous and vayne, so that of particulars, makyng a generall conclusion, he prooueth that all mens deuises are vayne. For he sayth ẏ: to get lyuyng & riches, it helpeth not to be wise, to runne fast, it auayleth not to be swift, to gette the victory, it booteth not to be strong: yea, the wyser, the holyer, the more laborious a man is, the lesse he preuayleth: so that as well his wysdome as his righteousnes and workes are of no strength or force. So that if neyther these nor any other thynges be of force, then of necessitie must all thynges be vayne and forceles.

The Argumēt and intent of this booke.

But here in the begynning must we roote out an errour and noysome opynion that many men haue, namely, that we thynke not Salomō to speake of the contempt of creatures which the scripture wyll not suffer to be contemned or condemned. For all thynges which God created are very good, and made for the vse of man, which thyng, Paule in playne wordes affirmeth.

1. Tim. 4.

The errour of them cōfuted which condemne Gods creatures.

The creatures of God are good.

1. Tim. 4. saying: Euery creature of God is good, and nothyng is to be reiected, that is receaued wyth thankes geeuyng. For it is sanctified by the word of God, & by prayer. It is therefore very foolyshly & wyckedly done of some preachers, to enuey agaynst glory, power, dignitie, riches, golde, fame, beuty, women, playnely condemning the creatures of God. A Magistrate or officer, is an ordinaunce of God. Golde is good, and ryches are the gyfte of God. A womā is a good thing, and made to be an helper vnto man. For God made all thyngs, to the ende they shoulde bee good and profitable some way to man. Therefore the creatures of God are not cōdemned by this booke, but the naughty affection and desier of men, which are not cōtented wyth these present creatures of God, and the vse of them, but are alway carefull how to heape vp ryches, to get honour, glory, and great name, as though they should alway lyue in thys world, lothyng still their present state and condition, and wyshing, and aspyring to one thyng after an other. For thys is a great vanitie and misery, that a man should defraude and byguyle hymselfe of the vse of such pleasures as are before hym, and vaynely to vexe and disquiet hymselfe about thyngs he hath not. These naughty affections (I say) and enterprises of men doth Salomon in thys booke condemne, and not the creatures themselues: For touching the vse of these creatures, hee hymselfe sayth hereafter: There is nothyng better then to be meary in thys life, and to eate and drinke, and man to reigne in his labour. &c. Where he shoulde be founde vtterly agaynst hymselfe, if he shoulde condemne the thynges, and not rather the abuse

The abuse of Gods creatures, & naughty affections of men are condemned in this booke.

of

of them, which is onely in our affections. Certayne foolishe men, not perceiuyng these thynges, haue taught vs absurde opinions about the contempt and forsakyng of the worlde, and haue themselues cõmitted many absurde thynges, as we read in the liues of the fathers, ỳ there were some which would not looke vpon the Dunne, (beyng worthy doubtles to haue had their eyes put out) and lyued most filthely and slouenly, because they would seem religious: which thyng what we may iudge of it, appeareth playnely by that is sayd before. For it is but a sory contemnyng of the worlde, to lyue solitarily, and out of the company of men. It is no contempt of golde to cast it away, or to abstayne from touchyng of money, as dyd the Franciscanes: but he in deede contemneth it that vsing it euery day, is not caryed away wyth the greedy desier of it. Thys therfore is the principall thyng that they shoulde cõsider which will read thys booke of Salomõ.

The errour of them that vnderstand not this booke.

Farthermore, this also is diligently to bee obserued, that Salomon in this booke speaketh onely of mankynde, and keepeth hymselfe within the bondes of mans nature, that is, of mans enterprises, deuises, desiers, and counsayles, least perhappes wee may imagine the same that the interpreters of this booke doe, which thynke the knowledge of nature, the studies of astromony and all philosophy, are here dispised, as vayne and vnprofitable speculations, whereas the commodities of these sciences are great and manifolde, as dayly we see before our faces. Besides that in searching out the groundes and causes of thynges naturall, there is aswell great pleasure as profit. And the holy Scripture proponeth diuers thynges, to teach vs the properties and vertues of them, such as

What thynges *Salomon* condemneth in this booke.

is

is thys in the Psalme: He maketh thee young and lusty like an Egle. Againe: Like as the Egle that prouoketh her young ones to flye. Againe: As the hart desireth the water springs and soyle. And: Go sluggish body to the Emmet and Pismere. Yea the scriptures are full of such metaphores and similitudes borowed of nature, so that he that should take thē out of the holy Bybie, shoulde take therewith much lyght from it also.

What the matter and content of this booke is.

To be plaine therfore, the subiect and matter of the booke is, that mankynde is so foolish, that he desireth and searcheth after his owne wayes many thynges which he can not compasse and bryng to passe, or if he bring them to passe, he can not enioy them, but possesseth them with care & losse, not thorough any fault in the thynges, but by reason of his most foolishe affectiōs & desiers. Julius Cesar was greatly occupyed to obteine the Empyre of ỹ Romaynes, but what perils & trauels sustayned he before he could get it? And hauing gottē it, he was not yet quiet, he had not bys whole wyshe, but while he was carefully busied to clyme yet higher, hee perished most miserably. The same cōmeth to passe in all worldly affaires, whē we haue greatest wealth, straight way, we lyke not with it. If we want & lacke, we are neuer quiet & at rest for desire of it. This vice of mans nature and inclination saw ỹ heathē writers. For thus sayth Ouide:

What the affectiōs of man are.

That lawfull is, we loth, and like
the thinges we are forbid to doe:
That foloweth vs, we flee, and seeke
to follow that, that flees vs fro. Againe:

The present state doth no man please,
Vpon his owne to liue at ease.

This is the vanitie of mans hart, neuer to be content with Gods present biessings, but to despise them, seeking still one thyng after other, neuer content till he haue gotten his desire: and hauyng once gotten it, nothing regarding it, but still deuising some other wayes.

The doctrine of this booke is, to vse our goods with thankes geuyng.

Therfore to repeat againe my saying, ỹ scope and end of this booke is to teach vs to vse Gods present benefits & creatures which he bountifully bestoweth vpon vs with thankesgeuing, without carefulnes, & hereafter, to the entent our hart may be quiet setled, and merry, beyng content wyth Gods worde and worlyng. So in ỹ chapiters folowing, he exhorteth vs, to eate and drinke with the wife of thy youth, & not to want oyle for our head, but to haue our garments white, according to ỹ saying of Christ: Sufficient to the day is the trauell and care therof. And as Paul saith: taking no thought for the flesshe, to fulfill the lustes of it. And if a man woulde followe this trade, hys mynde would still be quietly setled, and God would aboundantly prouide vs of all thynges. And now men vexe and disquiet themselues with two mischieles, namely, while they depriue themselues of the vse of thynges present, and trouble & vexe themselues with care of things absent. Or if they haue any vse of their goods, it is but bitter & vnpleasaunt. Cicero that great eloquent man, had beene maruelous happy, if he had knowen well how to haue vsed this quietnes, but the miserable man desirous still of higher aduauncement, & to set forward his owne wayes & deuises, depri-

ned himselfe of many great benefites, and was the cause of his owne calamitie and destruction.

S. Augustines saying.

Well, therfore doth *S. Augustine* say: Thou hast appointed (O lord) that that man, which is not contented with his owne estate and condition, shal haue a vexed & troubled minde, for his punishment.

The corruption of mās nature and miserie of mans affections.

And if a man would compare the goodes that he hath, with the euils, that he hath not, he should at length perceaue, what a treasure of goodes he possessed. He that hath his eye sight cleare and good, maketh no great accompt therof, nor is not much delighted with Gods benefits, but if he wanted eyes, he would giue all the goodes he had to haue them. Thus fare we in health, & all other lyke thynges. If God would giue me the eloquēce that Cicero had, the power of Cesar, the wisedome of Salomon, yet should I not be contented. Bycause we alwayes seeke after ꝑ we haue not. If we lack a wife we seeke for one. When we haue her, we lothe and despise her. We be all together lyke vnto quicksiluer, which in no place can stand still in rest. So inconstant is the mynde of mā, being therfore vnworthy to enioy any one of Gods benefites.

What thinges are reprehended in this booke.

Against this wretched affections of mā doth Salomon in this booke inuey, reprouyng the inconstancie & vanitie of mās hart which enioyeth neither his goodes present, nor yet them to come, bycause he doth not acknowledge the benefites he hath receaued, nor geeueth thankes to God for them, and vaynely seeketh after the thyngs he hath not, which is as one should hang betweene heauen and earth.

The

¶ The Preacher or oration of the son of Dauid, King of Hierusalem.

THe tytle of Ecclesiastes, or Preacher, I thinke, is rather to bee referred to the name of the booke, then to the authour therof, because we must vnderstand ỳ these wordes were openly pronounced by Salomon, in some assembly of his Lordes and others. For where he was a kyng, it was not his dutie or office to preach, but the Priestes, & Leuites. Wherfore I iudge these things were spoken by Salomon in some company and hearing of his counsellers and Courtyers, eyther at some banquet, or after the banquet, when diuers of his nobles, and men of honour were present, hauing long tyme before mused and studyed of the state and condition of these worldly affayres, or rather vayne affections, and so as it fell out, when they were all present, spake and vttered the same. And that afterward, some of the rulers of the Cõminaltie, or clergie noted them

The title of ỳ booke.

and gathered them togither: In so much that in the end of the booke, they confesse they receaued these things of one Shepherd or Pastor, and digested them in this order. As if some one of vs sitting at a table should discourse of mans affaires, other being present, writing what were sayd. So that this booke is a publike Oration which they heard Salomó make, of the which Oration, they thought good to call this booke Coheleth, that is to say, the Preacher. Not that Salomon was any Preacher, but for that the booke maketh as it were a publicke Sermon.

Why this booke is called the Preacher.

¶ All is but most vaine vanitie sayth the Preacher.

HEtherto, after a sort, we haue vnderstand the summe & end of this booke. Now ỹ greatest difficultie hereafter will be in the Hebrew wordes and figures, wherwith Salomós bookes of all others doe chiefly abounde. For Salomon hath a singular kynde of speakyng, seeking to sence more elegant then his father Dauid, as hauing his communication more beutified with flowers and figures then hys. He speaketh not lyke the common sorte,

Salomons phrase and speach.

sorte, but like a Courtyer. Dauids talke is more playne, and yet wanteth not all maner of vsuall figures. But Salomon vseth none but a Courtly kinde of talke. And as Courteours vse to corrupt the natiue speach of their predecessours, specially in writing: so Salomon, because he would not seeme to speake as the cõmon sorte vse, differeth far from his fathers plainnes of speach, and from Moses, who of all others is most plaine, and yet hath many notable figures in him, as hath also Dauid, but they are common, and vsed figures.

Most vayne vanitie.

THis an Hebrew phrase. For where the Hebrues haue no superlatiue nor comparatiue degree, they are constrained by way of compounding to make their superlatiue aud comparatiue degrees. So they vse to call a most excellent and singular song, the song of songes, as Salomon hath done. A vanitie of vanities, that is, the greatest vanitie that can bee, that is, nothing els but vanitie. All this he speaketh not against ỹ creatures thẽselues, but against the hart of man, that

The cause why one worde is doubled.

abuseth the creatures to his owne hinderaunce. And this repetition, vanitie of vanities, and all thinges are vayne, is Salomons peculiar copiousnes.

The theame and argumēt of this booke.

In this beginning he placeth the Theeme, as it were an argument of hys whole booke, wherof he meaneth to intreat, saying: that he wyll speake of the greatest vanitie that is, how mē are most vaine in all their deuises, because they be not satisfied with thinges present, which they vse not, nor can not enioy thynges absent. They turne euen the best things into misery and vanitie through their owne default, and not through fault of the thinges.

What hath a man of all the labour he taketh vnder the Sunne?

Mens deuises and enterprises are vaine.

But vanitie. That is to say: men are led and drowned with their owne deuises, and in all their enterprises what get they? naught els but vanitie, because their labour is vayne.

It auayleth nothing. For they neyther enioy things present, nor absent, because their mynde is not quiet, & so they are caryed betwæne heauen and earth,

and

and preuaile nothing. For this word ba-nitie properly ſignifieth that ỳ we cal nothing. They heape vp treaſures, riches, and ſeeke to be of power. &c. And all theſe are nothing. Golde in deede is a thyng, but to thee that canſt not vſe it, it is nothyng.

That he ſaith, of all his labour, muſt be vnderſtoode as ſpoken with a kinde of vehemẽcie. For hereby he declareth that he will not intreate of Gods workes, which are holy and wholeſome, as are all his creatures, but of mans workes, which are led and borne about with their owne wayes and deuiſes, meaning hereby to repreſſe their calamitie and toyleſull trauels. Neyther ſpeaketh he of the labour of our handes, commaunded by God *Gen.* 3. In toyle and labour ſhalt thou eate thy bread: but of our owne wayes and deuiſes, whereby we goe about to bring to paſſe, that ſeemeth good in our eyes. For the word Amal, ſignifieth miſery and calamitie, rather then labouring, euen ſuch a kinde a labour, as men afflicte and vexe themſelues with in vayne. For it is a moſt miſerable labour to be ſo buſily occupyed to bring our deuiſes

Of whoſe labour and trauel Salomõ ſpeaketh.

uises and enterprises to passe, and yet nothing to preuaile. He saith therefore: What getteth a man. &c. that is to say, in that he taketh so great paines to bring his deuises to passe. What hath he or getteth he, with all this labour and study of his but mere vanitie?

Vnder the Sunne.

He speaketh of mēs enterprises, not of Gods workes.

HEre he meaneth to describe the kingdome of vanitie, and the place where this kyngdome is, callyng this whole kyngdome of vanitie, a toyle or trauell vnder the sunne, by a kynde of singular phrase, such as we read is not vsed els where in the Scripture, because he will hereby exclude the workes of God which either he worketh hym selfe, or worketh in vs or cōmaundeth vs to worke, which workes are aboue the sunne, and beyond mans deuise. For the sunne riseth to the end that mē may go forth to their worke Psal. 103. that it may giue light to the world, to serue vs in our bodily affaires: vnder this sunne I say, are these vayne deuises taken in hād, wherwith men afflicte them selues. This is to be noted agayne, to take away that vayne cogitatiō

of

of mē, that haue interpreted theſe things of the vanitie of Gods creatures. In deed all Creatures are ſubiect to vanity, as Paule teſtifieth, Rom. 8. but yet the creatures them ſelues are good. Otherwiſe he would haue ſayd the ſunne had been a vayne thyng, but he excepteth ẏ ſunne, bycauſe hee ſayth vnder the ſunne. He ſpeaketh not therfore of Gods workes, which are all good and true, and aboue the ſunne, but of thoſe workes which are vnder ẏ ſunne, which we doe in this bodyly lyfe of ours, in the earth.

One generation paſſeth away, and an other commeth, but the earth abydeth, or indureth ſtill.

THou ſaſt he reciteth not the workes vnder the ſunne, but the very Creatures of God them ſelues, ſuch as is the generatiō of men, the ſunne, the water, and the lād, compriſing almoſt the foure Elements herein. For the Philoſophers haue ſo deuiſed the foure elemēts, wherin all thynges lyue that are in the world. They haue placed the fier aboue, ouer ẏ three other elements. And Salomon ſeemeth to take the ſonne, for this fiery element

Gods creatures are firme and ſtable, but men are caryed and vexed with diuerſe deſires.

ment so that in these wordes he expoundeth what he would haue vnderstanded, by these wordes vnder the sunne, so that the summe of his meanyng is this. The creatures of this world, the sunne, the ayer, the water &c. Wherein men haue there beyng, abyde in ỹ rule and law appointed them: they go forth, they runne backe agayne, they are caryed &c. euen as they are ordeined, they haue their prefixed courses, they chaunge not, they go not out of them, but do that they ought to do, as the sunne goeth his way and certeine course &c. But men which haue their beyng in these foure elementes, creatures of such constãcy and stabilitie can not do the like, bicause they wauer and stagger, beyng most inconstant by reason of the varietie of their diuers entreprises and desires, not content within their owne boundes, busmesses, and vocations &c.

False interpretatiõ blamed.

Wherfore they expounde not the matter which vnderstãd the generation that passeth, to be the Iewes, and the generation to come, to be the Christians, bicause Salomon speaketh here of the perpetuall successe of generations and ages.

The

The sunne riseth and goeth down, and returneth to hys place agayne breathyng, that hee may rise vp agayn. The wynde goeth toward the South, and turneth to the North, fetcheth his compasse, whyrleth about, goeth forth, and returneth againe to his circuites from whence he dyd come.

Gods creatures abyde within theyr bondes, but men stray out of theirs.

SAlomon continueth in describyng of this kyngdome & place of vanitie, proouing the stabilitie of ỹ sunne by his perpetuall and constant rising, sittyng, and course. Farthermore he signifieth that ỹ wynde and the ayer foloweth the force and course of the sunne. For he maketh the sunne the Lord and ruler as it were of ỹ elementes. This sunne (I say) hath the winde at his pleasure, and gouerneth all things by his administration, tempering the ayer, the water, and the wynde, by his race and course &c. When he ariseth, he maketh (as we sée) one ayer, whē he setteth, an other. And euen after a like sorte he worketh an other tyme in alteryng the water &c. For when the sunne setteth, the earth becommeth moyst, the wa-

water cold, the ayer dankish &c. Yea almost all creatures are diuersly disposed accordyng to the rysing and settyng of the sunne.

And breathing againe to his place.

The sunne rayseth the wyndes with hys mouyng.

The word *Saaph*. For the which our interpreter hath naughtely put returned, signifieth drawyng of the breath. He meaneth therfore that the sunne, by reason of his violent force, wherewith hee is caryed, is as it were the cause of all wyndes & blastes, as when one runneth, he moueth the ayer, & causeth a breath. To breathe therfore, is ẃ a most swift force to be caryed from the East vnto the West, and thẽ to the East agayne, which commeth to passe euery day and euery moneth.

The wynde whyrleth and turneth about.

That is to say: the sunne when he turneth to the East agayne, there to rise, caryeth the wynde with hym, and hath the wynde in his power. All this is Salomons peculiare copiousnes, whereby briefly, he meaneth nothyng els, but that

the

the ſunne riſeth and ſetteth euery day, and that the wynde is rayſed wyth the force and violence therof.

All flouds runne into the ſea, and yet the ſea runneth not ouer. The flouds returne to the place from whence they flowed, that they may from thence flow out agayne.

The cauſe of ſprynges and fountaines.

ARiſtotle diſputeth from whence the fountaines and wyndes doe come, and is meruelouſly troubled in finding out ỹ ſame, and diuers other with him; but yet none of them could finde out that that Salomon here ſayth, that all riuers come from the ſea, and runne into ỹ ſea agayne, making the ſea to be the origine and beginning of all riuers, from whēce by certaine ſecret drayninges vnder the earth, they ſwell vp & breake out, where notwithſtanding diuerſe of the Philoſophers imagine, that the ſpringes and beginninges of all Riuers come from vnder the earth. Howbeit Salomons ſaying is the trueth, namely, that all fountaynes & Riuers flow frō the ſea, & ebbe into it agayne. These are very great wonders. Firſt in the courſe & mouing

of

of that huge light wherof we haue spoke already. Then in that the Riuers runne into the sea, and yet the sea is not filled therewith. For els if the Riuer Albis had flowed still from the beginning of ỹ worlde, it might haue risen so high, to haue filled the ayre, euen vp to ỹ Mone. And now although it hath runne more then fiue thousand yeares, that it still abideth within the bankes, and runneth not ouer.

All thinges are led with their own course and order.

He saith therfore, that all things continue in their order, and perpetuall motion, as the Sunne runneth about euery day, and neuer ceasseth: so the ayre continueth still in his motion: so the flouds dayly runne into the Sea. The Sea againe by certaine secrete conduites and vaines in the mountaines soketh & dropeth, as it were into springes & Riuers, and the earth is a very strainer, through the which the water is clarified.

Thus we see that Salomon in fewe wordes comprehendeth the meruelous disposition and motion of the fower elementes within themselues, naming the earth, the Sunne, the winde & flouds.

I suppose Salomon meaneth by the allegory

allegory of these naturall alterations, to bring vs to the matter that he treateth of, and frameth this similitude vnto vs. As if he shoulde say: Euen as all these thinges abide in their chaungeable courses, so doe all our affayres likewise. The sunne is neuer wearied notwithstãding his continuall course, the waters runne into the Sea, and yet are not spent and consumed. &c. Euẽ so fareth it wyth mẽ. They still doe as their elders haue done, which gaue themselues vnto vanitie. Euẽ as they nothing preuailed, no more doe we. No man amendeth by an others example, or taketh euer the more hẽde, by an others dainger. Iulius was most vainely occupyed. Cicero sought to bee eloquent. But what was the end of their trauell? most vaine, because they attey-ued not to that they desired. If he had v-sed his eloquence not after his owne de-uise, but as tyme and place had serued him, doubtles, he shoulde haue bẽne a most happy man. These mens examples doe we follow. &c. Therefore, all mens deuises, rise, fall, goe forward, & come backeward, and continue as they alway haue done. So there is in these wordes, not

what the meaning of this com-parison is.

not onely a description of the kingdome of vanitie, but also a similitude and comparison of mans deuises.

All thinges are hard to be knowen, neither is any man able to expresse them.

The errour of Sophisters vpon this place.

THis text the Sophisters haue corrupted, while they thinke ỹ study of Philosophie is here reprehẽded, whereby mẽ search out the nature & causes of things, as though this were an euill thyng, not able to be declared. But it is not euill to search out the nature and properties of thynges. Moreouer ỹ causes of all things are most manifest, so farre of is it, that they be hard and difficult. This therfore he meaneth, that he wil speake of the vanitie of mã, but that the same is so much and so great, that he thinketh he can not sufficiently expresse the same. It can not be vttered he sayth how great the vanitie of man is, which thyng Persius the Poete declareth: saying, *O what great vanitie is in the world*. And an other writer sayth: *No man lyueth content with his estate. And euery man ought to lyue within his boundes and cõpasse*: vanitie stretcheth

The vanitie of man greater thẽ can be expressed ỹ wordes.

far-

farther, than can be rekoned in all mens affaires. Therfore it is but litle that I can ſay of vanitie, if a man conſider the greatnes therof, It is to groſſe and to much. For ſo great is this worldes vanity, that I can not with any wordes expreſſe it. The thyng is greater, then either men can conceaue, or I am able to vtter. It is an hard matter to declare the varietie of mens deuiſes and deſires, what it is that Iulius coueteth, what Alexãder, what Salomon, what Cato, what Scipio, what Pompey. The affections of men are allwayes more, then the toung of man can expreſſe. And now he proueth that he ſayd by an example.

The eye is not ſatiſfied with ſeyng, nor the eare with hearyng.

The inſatiable gulfe of mans hart.

That is to ſay mans eyes and ſenſes haue neuer any reſt. If I ſhould goe about to declare but onely the pleaſures we conceaue by ſeeyng and hearyng, I ſhould take an endles labour in hand. If the eye be not ſatiſfied with ſeyng, how ſhall I be able to vtter all the vanitie of man. To be ſhort, naught and vnſearcheable is the hart of mã. Such is the diuerſitie

sitie of mans affections and desires, that that the eyes haue neuer seene ynough. Now they desire to see one thyng, now an other, & whē they haue their wish, yet is not their mynde contented. The hart is a gulfe alwayes gaping, it coueteth all things, and though it haue all it desireth, yet stil seeketh it for more. Cōsider Alexander Magnus, who being Lord almost of ỹ whole world, yet whē he heard there were innumerable worldes, sighed, saying, *and I haue not yet vanquished one world*. Thus in his hart hee coueted infinite worldes. What man is so eloquent, that he can expresse this most vayne affectiō of the hart? This vanitie and greedynes of mans hart can not be expressed. That whiche hee hath doth not like hym, and wisheth for that which hee hath not. The eye is not satisfied with seeing: vnderstand this generally, not as they haue expounded it: *It is not satisfied with beholdyng of heauen.*

Alexander Magnus.

What thing is that that hath been? euen the same that is to come. What is that that hath been done? euen the same that shall be done. And there is no new thyng vnder

the

the sonne. Is there any thyng, wher of it may be sayd, Loe, this is new, for the lyke hath been in the times that haue been before vs. There is no remembraunce of thinges past. no more shall there be any remembraunce of thynges to come hereafter.

HEre do the Sophisters trifle agayne, vnderstandyng these wordes of the Creatures their selues, where Salomon playnely signifieth, he speaketh of mens affections and desires, saying: The eye is not satisfied &c. Bycause hearyng and seyng are such senses, as soonest perceaue things, & are most delighted with them. And thus he meaneth.

What is that that hath been?

THat is to say, after thou hast prepared that thou desirest yet is not thy mynde quyeted, the same affection abydeth still after thy desire, y thou haddest before. The mynde is neuer contented. Alexander, when he had ouercome the world, had no more, then he had before. For his mynde was neuer the more satisfied. Iulius thought to establish a com-

Mans mynde is vnsatiable.

mon weale, so thought Brutus so, but neither of them brought it to effect. This is it that hee sayth, What is that that hath been? Verely euen the same that hath been downe afore, that is to say, the same affection still remaineth, which will neuer bee satisfied. That that hee desireth or studyeth to haue or bryng to passe, is euen the same hee hath all ready. To bee short What a man hath to day of the same will he couet more to morow.

Vanitie of mans hart.

For here is signified the restles, and insatiable appetite and vanitie of mans hart, that cā not be satisfied with things present whatsoeuer they bee. That I haue done this day is nothing, although I haue had my purpose, I am not content. I will still prooue other wayes. Thus doe all mē, so did Iulius, so Pompey, so Alexander. And euen as they did, doe all other. They desier things to come, and lothe thinges present. Remēber therfore that Salomō speaketh here of mans doings, and not of Gods, either already done, or to be done. For he speaketh alway of the thynges which are done vnder the sunne in this kingdome

of

of the worlde. It followeth therfore: There is no new thing vnder the Sunne, neither any thing whereof it may be sayd, loe, this is new.

This place hath meruelously troubled the Sophisters, because they read in the Scriptures many new thinges were done. For the nativitie of Christ was a new thing. A Virgine to be a mother was a new thing. Againe: I will make a new heauen and a new earth. And agayne: I will make all thinges a new. Againe: The Lord will doe a new thing vpon the earth. &c. These sentences haue caused them to trifle egregiously vppon this place, because they would reconcile both Salomons sayinges, & these other sentences. But this commeth to passe through the ignorance of Salomōs phrase, because they marke not what he meaneth, when he saith, vnder ỹ Sun. For if thou vnderstand these wordes of Gods creatures and workinges, it is no true saying. For God worketh alwayes newe thinges, and we doe nothing that is new. For there is but one old Adam in all mē. Our forefathers therfore haue abused these thinges euen as we abuse

In man there is no new thyng. but concupiscence & naughty inclinatiōs dwell in all men.

them. The same affection that was in Alexander, was in Iulius, and the lyke in all Emperours and kinges, the same is in vs also. Euen as they could not be satisfied, no more can wee. They were wicked and vngodly, so be wee. We desire to satisfie all our sences, but we are not able, because our hart is insatiable. Therfore we doe no new thing vnder ye Sunne. There are no new affections in men, but we abyde alwayes one, neyther refraine wee our curiositie, no although we be warned by their exãples. Mans hart ought to be content with thinges present, and to mortifie the affection of thinges to come, which thyng because they doe not, it is iustly all togither vanitie. This it is therefore that he sayth: There is no new thing vnder the sunne, that is, in men there is nothing that new is. But God doth newe thinges euery day.

God worketh newe thinges in some men.

And yet afterward in this same chapiter he sayth, he saith, I haue passed all the kinges that were before me in wisdome: was not this a new or straunge thing. Yes truely. But this was the gyft of God. Ergo, a very new thyng.

And

And all men deſire euen the ſame, but thou ſhalt ſcarcely finde one that hath altered this affectiõ. Others haue builded as we doe, haue made wars as we doe. And euen as they haue not by their deſires & enterpꝛiſes attayned to that they deſired, no moꝛe haue wee. But God by his woꝛkes both many and great, doth allwayes new thinges.

There is no remembraunce of thinges paſſed.

That is to ſay: men follow their deſires, and ſet foꝛward their owne enterpꝛiſes, they will not conſider by example of their pꝛedeceſſours, how they nothing pꝛeuailed. No man marketh how Alexander and Iulius attemptes were but vaine. The example of Dion, that ſo vnluckely vꝛged his owne deuiſe in calling home Dionyſius againe, and in ſtabliſhing his cõmon weale, could not make Brutus take hꝛde. Theſe are ỹ themes as it were of his whole booke, whereof he meaneth to ſpeake, that is to ſay of ỹ vanities of man, which goeth about diuerſe thinges, and can not bꝛing them to paſſe, that is, of the inconſtancie and in-

When are not mooued with the examples of their pꝛedeceſſours.

satiabilitie of mans hart.

I my selfe the preacher was a kyng of Israell at Hierusalem, and dyd apply my mynde to seeke & search out the knowledge of all thinges that are vnder heauen.

WEe haue hetherto heard the generall theam and argument of the booke, wherein he purposed to treat of the vnhappy deuises and enterprises of men, striuing to set forward and fulfill their owne wayes, which God doth frustrate, as one alwayes withstãding such attẽptes. Now he beginneth to rehearse certaine particulars, gathering by a dialecticall induction, that vniuersall propositions, wherwith he began his booke, that is to say, that all thinges were but vanitie. And he increaseth this misery, or vanitie, that where mã seeth his forefathers deuises, and enterprises made frustrate, and how they wearyed themselues in vaine, will not yet be learned. For the flesshe is so foolishe, and the reason so blynded, that it can by no examples be amended.

He beginneth with him selfe, and setteth

teth him selfe for an example of this vanitie. I sayth he went about to gouerne my kyngdome prudently and notably & could not bring it to passe, although I was a kyng appointed by God. For it is well knowen that this kyng was greatly commended for his diuine wisedome and highly renowned in ỳ Scriptures. 3. *Reg.* 3. Bicause (saith God) thou hast asked this thyng, and not long lyfe nor riches &c. Loe I haue giuen thee a wife and an vnderstandyng hart, so that there hath been none before lyke vnto thee nor shall be after thee. This is a singular testimonye of this kings wisedome, & yet this prudent and wise kyng, could not bring his desire to passe, his attẽptes could haue no successe & not without a cause. For god gaue him not this wisedome, to the end hee might do all thinges. God sayd not, I will giue thee such wisedome as all other shall obey &c. So that by reason of this wisedome Salomon had more trauell and grief then good successe. He sawe it was the will of God, that hee should well gouerne his kingdome, and giue and appointe good lawes for his people. But

He begynneth hys doctrine & the exãple of himselfe, which hee setteth out to all men to folow.

no

no man followed him, neither his chief rulers, nor the people.

Of his owne example by an argument a maiore.

He sayth therfore, for asmuch as my deuises haue not succeded to my mynde, nor haue beene obeyed, what shall happen to other of lesse wisedome? First (saith he) I protest myne owne experiẽce. I that here speake vnto you was king of the Israelites. All these wordes are spoken with a vehemencie of affection I am a king, and yet I can not preuaile. For who is able to resist the kyng, which is Lord ouer all men? I am not a king onely, nor of euery people, but of the people of God, amongest whom haue been many holy men, Prophetes, and teachers of Gods law &c. To conclude, I am king of Hierusalẽ, that holy place which God chose to dwell in. If a kyng of such power, so frã, so wise, of so holy a people, in so holy a Citie, where God and his word was continually, could not bryng his holy and good deuises to passe, what shall we say of others?

I did apply my minde to seeke and search out the knowledge of all thynges, that are vnder the sonne.

We

WE must abide againe in ỹ Theme. He speaketh not of Gods wozkes, which are not onely vnder the Sunne, but are euery where, but of those things that are done by mẽ vnder heauẽ, which is the place and kyngdome appointed foz vs. Foz Gods wozkes are aboue heauẽ, beneath heauen, and euery where. They are the wozkes therefoze that we doe of our owne heades and power, wherof he saith, I purposed in my mynde to set all thinges well in ozder, to haue my kyngdome well gouerned. But loke how much God wzought, so much was ozdeined. And where God dyd not put to his hand, there set I fozward my counsell, wisedome, and enterpzises, to haue all thinges well ozdered, but all in vayne. Foz I nothyng pzeuailed, but dyd miserably trouble and vexe my selfe, as followeth:

He speaketh of hys owne wozkes & enterpzises.

Such trauell and labour hath God giuen to the childrẽ of men, to exercise them selues therin.

THat is to say, God gaue me such a cogitation and mynde foz my punishemẽt, that at length I should learne, that

Wẽ troubled wyth their owne wisdeme.

I ought not to truſt to myne owne wiſe-
dome, and that any thing were it neuer
ſo wiſely tokē in hand, was but in vaine,
if God would not proſper it. I could not
abyde ỳ there ſhould be any defect, or er-
rour in any thing &c. It iuſtly therefore
fell out, ỳ I ſhould be vexed with this co-
gitatiō, that I might learne to reſigne &
giue ouer myne owne will. And ſee that
myne owne wiſedome was nothyng. And
this is an euill veration, becauſe we will
not giue place vnto ỳ wiſedome of God,
but will ſeem wiſer then he, and not ſuf-
fer thoſe thinges, which the wiſedome of
God ſuffereth, nor commit our ſelues to
his will.

The care of man to his vocation, ruled by ỳ worde of God, good and neceſſary.

Howbeit that cogitation and inquiſi-
tion that ſeeketh to profite the common
weale is not onely not euill, but good al-
ſo. He is a good mā that is deſirous to doe
the world good. He that is thus mynded
and reaſoneth: Would God this Citie,
or prince would vnderſtand and be wiſe,
is not euill mynded. For to bee carefull
for the well ordering and gouernyng of
a common weale, is an high vertue, and
the greateſt that is amōg men. But this
ſearch (I ſay) and enquire to benefite my

com-

common weale, was vayne, it succeded not. But I was vexed therewith. Cicero, Demosthenes, most prudent men, greatly desired to haue their common weales to prosper, & yet were they cause of all their troubles & mischieues. Thus did God make their wisedome of none effect. And so this booke condemneth the care and thought that we take to set forward matters either publike or priuate, by our owne deuises and wisedome.

Marke Adam, Abraham, Isaac, and all the holy fathers. Assone as they begã to trust to their owne counsailes, besides the word of God, all things went backeward with them. For vnles God by his word direct and appointe men, they can doe no good without Gods word, we can doe nothyng although we begyn. So Adam and Eue, saying: when their sonne Cain was borne: I haue gotten a man of the Lord, were deceaued. Bycause it was a cogitation of man, without the word. They had conceaued great hope, that this should be the sede. Well he is brought vp, made heyre of the worlde. Shortly after he sleieth his brother: there all their vayne cogitation lyeth on the grounde.

Mãs counsels not ruled by gods word, are deceaued.

grounde. So was Isaac beguiled in his first begotten sonne Esau. Saules intent was vaine, to leaue the kingdome to his children. So was Dauid, when he preferred his sonne Absolon. Thus doth God vse to elude and disapoint all cogitations and counsels that stay not vpon his worde. And very well. For why wil we prescribe hym, and adde any thing to his wisdome?

we must abstayne, & not trust to our owne counsels, but to gods word onely.

Let vs learne therefore to submit our selues to Gods cõsels, and refraine our selues from such cares & cogitations as God hath not commaũded. There is no surer way, nor more acceptable to God then to abstaine from our owne deuises, and to stay vpon his worde: there shall wee finde inough to occuppe our selues vpon. He hath commaunded vs to haue fayth, loue, to beare the crosse. Wyth these I say, we may be occuppyed well inough, other things let vs take as they fall out, leauing all care of successe therof vnto God. For now, because we contemne his wordes, god againe punisheth vs with vexing our selues in vayne. For God will not haue the good or euyll, that wise men and Princes deuise wythout

his

his worde to come to passe, as it is sayd Psal. 32. The Lord bringeth the counsaile of the Heathen to naught. &c. Therfore where greatest wisdome is, & most diligence, there doth God most disappoint mens deuises, as plainely commeth to passe in our dayes, where the Princes and Bishops of Germany can bring nothing to effect for all their mætinges and Counsailes. And yet can not God with al this make vs to submit our counsels vnto him. It is called therfore an euill occupation, that is, such as vexeth & disquieteth (not for that wisdome, and counsayle be euill) by a common phrase of Scripture, as in Mathew the vj. Sufficient for the day is the trauell thereof. Now this trauell or affliction hath God geuen vnto man, not to destroy them, but to call them from their foolishe wisdome & wayes, and to teach vs that our wisdome is nothing. Cicero wrate many things wisely, which when we that reade them go about to erpresse, they go forward like the crabbe, and nothing succedeth bycause we take in hand of our owne selues to doe them. For very true wisedome can doe nothing, but

where the greatest wisdome of man is, without ỹ feare of God, there is most foolishnes.

the

the will of God, wherfore we must pray Thy will be done &c.

I considered all the thyngs that are done vnder the sunne, and lo, they are all but vanitie and vexation of mynde. Thynges crooked can not be straight, nor the imperfection of thynges can be numbred.

THis is a cõfirmation of that he spake before: I haue not onely proued this vanitie by myne owne example, but I haue considered all other men, and I see that their wayes & deuises be but vayne aswell as myne. Euen as myne own deuises succeded not, no more haue I sene any other mens in the worlde succede. Wise mens deuises are made frustrate and disappointed aswell as fooles. Therfore by these wordes is that affection called good or godly intẽtion beaten downe, when we say commonly, I haue a good intent or meanyng. But that good intẽt is nothing that is not gouerned by the word of God, and springeth not of fayth. And all other how beautiful so euer they appeare, are most hurtfull. Euen Cicero him selfe had the experience hereof as

Unhappy is ỹ good intention, that is not ruled by the worde of God, and fayth.

he

he witneſſeth: The beſt deuiſes, ſpeede woorſt. And God doth very well in so fruſtrating our purpoſes. For if matters ſhould neuer ſo litle ſuccede as we would, then would we by and by be puffed vp with pride, and aſcribe the glory to our ſelues, which is agaynſt the glory of God, who alone is to be glorified &c.

Crookedneſſe can not bee made ſtraight, nor the imperfection in thynges be numbred.

HE addeth the cauſe why all thynges trouble men with vayne care and thought. Becauſe ſayth he the defaultes and imperfection in thinges are infinite and can not be amended, their greatneſſe and multitude ſo farre paſſeth all mans deuiſes. This is that therfore he would ſay: I haue wiſedome and vnderſtādyng inough to perceaue what is meete and expedient. But what am I able to doe therein? There is ſo great crookednes & depravation in all mens affayres, that they can neuer be amended. Conſider ye Empyre of Rome, which notwithſtanding it was prudently gouerned, yet it could neuer finde or ſtabliſhe any firme

The cauſe why all thynges cā not be ruled, by our counſell.

peace with all their deuises. But when one enemy was slayne, there arose diuers other. And when they were without warres abroad, they had ciuile commotions, till the commō weale was destroyed. Euen so fareth it with all men. Let euery man marke the course of hys owne lyfe, and if all thinges succæde according to his mynde all his lyfe long, let him reproue this booke of lying.

All thinges must be cōmitted to God, and he desired to order our deuises, and to geeue them good successe.

Wherefore it shall be best to commit all things vnto God, and to follow those which say: let it goe as it goeth, because it will goe, as it goeth. Which thing also the Dutch prouerbe teacheth vs: Thou art yet a great deale too Greene to make of an olde Knaue an honest man. Hereof wee see Princes which would best reforme and amende all things, many tymes doe much hurt. In this worlde nothyng can be so well ordered ỹ all thinges can be well done, & no imperfection remayne. Therefore it is best to walke in faith, which letteth God reigne alone, & prayeth that Gods kingdome may come. Enē as Christ did not commit himselfe to men, but bare with all mens defaultes and iniquities.

When

When it was ſayde that Iohn Baptiſt was killed, an horrible offence, he ſayd nothyng, but went into the wildernes, and fedde the people, he makes no accompt of it, preached the worde onely, and did his duety. Therfore this a Chriſtian wiſdome for a man to commit himſelfe to the kingdome of God, and all his matters to him that iudgeih iuſtly. A Chriſtian man may iudge of offences by the worde of God, but he may not ſet his hand to the puniſhing of them, vnleſſe God vrge him thereto, or that he be appointed by his worde. Therefore where thou art but one man, and art not able to correcte and amēde all that is amiſſe, leaue it to him that is of more power then thou, which alone is able to bryng all thinges to paſſe.

I communed with mine owne hart ſaying: loe, I am come to greate eſtate, and haue gotten more wiſedome then all they that haue been before me in Hieruſalem: yea my hart had great experience of wyſdome & knowledge, for therunto I applyed my mynde, that I might

know what were wisdome and vnderstanding, what errour and fooliſhnes, and I perceaued that this alſo was but a vexation of mynde: for where much wiſdome is, there is alſo great trauell and diſquietnes, and the more knowledge a mā hath, the more is his care.

The wiſedome of kyng Salomon.

THeſe wordes are euen ỹ ſame almoſt which he ſayde before. I (ſayth hee) haue muſed oftētimes, how it commeth to paſſe, that my deuiſes and enterpriſes could come no better forwarde, conſidering I am a man of ſuch authoritie, and excell all other in wiſdome. &c. For beſides that diuine wyſdome, wherewyth God had endued hym, he alſo wonderfully excelled in worldly wyſdome and pollicie, in ſo much that the order that was among his ſeruauntes ſæmed wonderfull to the Quēne of Arabia.

Wiſdome and knowledge.

what knowledge is.

BY knowledge he meaneth not ſpeculation, but a kinde of practiſe and experience, & diſcretion in doing of things which we call ſight & perfect vnderſtanding in matters, as is ſpokē of in ỹ Pſal.

Wisedome is that knowledge wher- what wis-
by I perceaue how a common weale is dome is.
to bee set vp and gouerned, which after-
ward is to be moderated and ordered, by
knowledge and experience, accordyng to
circumstances fallyng out, and according
to reason and moderation as tyme and
matter shall beare it.

Errour and foolishnes.

VErely euē to put them out from me
and my kyngdome, and to enhaunce
and set vpon those other. But what hap-
pened? I founde that this also was but a
veration of the mynde, and fruteles care,
without end. Therefore the wisest way
is, for a man to frame him selfe to take
all thing in good part: why?

For where much wisdome is, there
is also great trauell.

He that seeth much and knoweth
how thynges will go, It can not be, but
he must be wrath and thinke. Ah howe
vngodly and how shamefully doth it
passe ouer, whēce commeth this stoma-
kyng and indignatiō, but of much wise-
dome? For hee that hath knowledge in
many thinges, hath many causes to an-

ger him, as seyng euery day many vnworthy thynges committed. He whose eyes are shut, knoweth nothing, & therfore nothing offendeth him. Wherfore learne to be still, & to commit the kingdome vnto God, and to pray: Lord, let thy will bee done. Otherwise thou wearyest thy hart, and thy body & doest but lose thy tyme, and thy life.

The second Chapter.

Then sayd I thus in my hart: go to, I will take myne ease, & haue good dayes. But loe, that is vanitie also.

The continuation of the former chapiter with this present.

BEcause in the Chapiter before, he shewed that care, & thought, and mens forecastes, specially such as we prouide for our selues by, are vaine & of no force, teachyng vs to be content, with the word of God, and his working, so that we should presume to do nothing, but that the word of God prescribeth vs, or his working enforceth vs to doe, which yet many tymes is contrary to his word, as when hee oppresseth vs with some euill, euen when we

we haue done accordyng to his worde, wherein we haue nede of faith and patience, that in these cases we yeld not to our owne deuises & sēke to escape thereby, but cōmit our selues vnto him, & to suffer his hand in his owne worke: now he turneth him to an other deuise.

I sayd in my hart, I will take myne ease.

As though he should say. Seyng carefulnes, and myne owne deuises profite not, I will refraine from them, and and turne me to the right hand, and take to me a quiete and easie life, and delight in pleasures: I will let all go as they come, and take my pleasure. But this was also a vayne deuise, and prospered no more then that first deuise of mans wisedome and carefulnes. For euē herein also dyd God withstād me. For quyetnes commeth not but of Gods word and working. And this doth experiēce it selfe teach vs. Many tymes banquetes and feastes are appointed to prouoke mirth. Fine iunkets, enterludes, & games are deuised to cheare the ghestes, but most times the contrary falleth out. And sel-

Mourning companion vnto pleasure.

dome doth any good collatiō or pitaunce come of it. For either there are present some sad & seuere countenaūces, or els some other thing disturbeth all the feast, and specially when men deliberate to make such mirth and passtime long before. Many tymes it commeth to passe, that some casualtie falleth out euen in the merieſt banquet, by Gods appointement. And so commeth it to passe also in other matters.

Loue is bitter.

Some man seeketh his pleasure in loue, but by and by he feeleth the bitternes therof, which thing S. Augustine also complayneth of in his bookes of confessions, how he was miserably scourged in the middle of his loues. Euen so, when we take our pleasures, by and by the sauce therof is bitter. Therfore there is no better thing, then to abide in Gods word and working, so to frame our hart that it may be at rest and quiet, and contented with his present state and condition. If God geeue vs a wife, to take her as a present benefite, and to vse her. If thou wilt passe these bounds, & encrease this benefite, thou shalt haue sorrow & sadnes in steede of mirth and ioye. We

We must vse Gods giftes with ỹ acknowledgyng & fearyng of hym.

must

must therefore doe onely, that that God willeth and appointeth. If thou seekest for ioy and delight, thou must looke for it, at his hand. Therefore euen as God offereth thee such occasion, so take holde therof, and be meary with those that are meary. And among those that are meary, seeme not thou to be a father Sapience and seuere person, as doe these holy ones, which will dashe and disturbe that mirth that God geueth vs. Onely acknowledge thou them to come of gods gifte, and receaue them of his hand, and vse them as his giftes.

To be short, we must not take and enioy our pastimes or pleasures, or deuises, nor any other thing, but euē so vse them as God sendeth them. Let men yelde vp all vnto God. It is not our partes to prescribe either place, person, or maner, for then we shall be deceaued. Therfore mirth is not condemned as any vayne or naughty thyng, but mans enterprise and counsell, whyle we wyll procure and seeke to be meary wythout the will of God, but must vse them both as God sendeth them. For euen as to procure sorrow and care of our owne

As God sendeth thē so must we enioy with feare, either aduersitie or prosperitie.

heades

heades and deuises, is an offence: euen so, when God sendeth them, not to beare and suffer them, is likewise an offence. So to auoyde mirth, and not to receaue it when God sendeth it, is a damnable thing, as these holy men forsoth which put vppon them their Cato his countenaunce, appointing tymes, places, persons, and other rules of seueritie, which is the propertie of hipocrites, and but a vanitie. They wil haue vs to mourne wt them that mourne, and they will not reioyce with them that reioyce. Sadnes, mirth, and all other like, both outward, and inward thinges, must not be measured by place, tyme. &c. but euē as God of his frée goodnes sendeth them: so may we frélye vse them. Therefore he sayth:

The vsage of hypocrites.

I sayd in my hart, I will goe, and and take my pleasure.

THat is to say, I would haue measured the matter, by rule and by order, but this was nothing but vanitie. Here must we warne you againe, that you swarue not from the Theame, as Hierome did, which foolishly glorieth, that he learned out of this booke, the contēpt

The errour of Hierome.

of

of the worlde, and of all creatures, which afterward, the Monkes and Sophiſters imitated, being ignorant what thing it is to contemne the worlde, or what the worlde is. For this is ỹ very way to teach men to contemne Gods creatures, and to forbid mẽ the vſe of them, againſt the manifeſt wordes of holy Scripture.

What it is to forſake ỹ worlde.

Therfore to forſake the worlde, is not to abſteine from Gods creatures, but from our owne deuiſes. Thus myght Hierome well haue taught his beloued Bleſilla: Contemne not the creatures of this worlde, but thine owne deuiſes, coũſels, cares, and affections, wherby thou ſeekeſt through thine owne wit to bryng all thinges to paſſe. Honour, and the delight we haue in thinges, is not euyll, but carefulnes in matters, and thyne owne wayes and fetches, are to bee ſet naught by. Neither is this to contemne the worlde, to goe courſely apparelled, to ſubdue the fleſhe with watchyng, to bring it vnder with faſting. &c. but to vſe theſe matters as occaſion offreth. If God ſend meate, to eate it: if none, to ſuffer hunger: If he call vs to honour, to accept it: if he ſend loſſe & hinderaunce to beare it.

it. If he cast vs in prison, to take it patiently. If he will aduaūce vs to a kingdoume, to follow his calling. If he depose vs frō one, not to care for it. Euē as Dauid gouerned his kingdome, & toke hys banishment both in good part: a true despiser of this world. Such therefore are right despisers of the world, as take all thinges in good part, as God doth send it vnto them, and vse all things in this world with thankes geuing, while they haue them, and cā willingly want them, when God taketh them away.

I sayd vnto the man geuē to laughter, thou art mad, and to the man geuen to mirth, what dooſt thou?

No pleasure dureth with a man alwayes.

VNderstand all these thinges of mans wayes and intentes. Thus hee meaneth, I thought by art to deuise me good dayes, to seeke my pleasure and pastime: but this cogitation was a mere madnes, which two wayes troubled me. For first the trauell of deuising and searching vexed my minde. Then when I thinke I haue attained to my purpose, by and by some sorrow or grief falleth out, that causeth me to lose both my labour, & ioy.

This

This is it that he saith, the laughter that I seke for, and the ioy, which I go about to procure, what auaileth it me? For I cā neuer attaine to it, but alwayes some grief or trouble happeneth betweene. Therfore that ioy & mirth is best, which is not sought for but which God sendeth vnlooked for, without thy cares and deuises. So the outward mirth is good, but with those ỳ vse it well. The wicked although they liue in neuer so much pleasure, yet theirs is no true ioye, because, they acknowledge it not for Gods gift, but straitway loth it, and inuent other delightes, being neuer content with that which is present.

And I thought in myne hart to absteine from wyne, and to gouerne my hart wisely, and to comprehēd foolishnes, vntill I might perceaue what was good for the children of men, to doe vnder heauen as long as they lyued. A gaynst Monkish lyfe.

HEre now the third tyme, he deuiseth an other way, minding to prouе, if happely this way would succede. For as much as in this life, which I leade in the

world

worlde amongest men, neither the cares wherewith I breaking my selfe, to profite others, nor yet pleasures succede, but are all in vayne: I wil take to me an vnpleasaũt, and austere life, vtterly to liue in abstinence and hardely &c. I maruell that these false contemners of the world and the Creatures therin, haue not marked this place of Salomon, where hee calleth this austere and seuere kinde of life a vanitie. Here therefore he condemneth those straight rules of the Monkes, specially of the Charterhouse mẽ, which yet the worlde wondreth at, and holdeth for godlynes and holines. The sentence is as it were a thunderbolte against all rules, and Monkish religions, whereby they make those thinges in subiection to them and their deuises, whiche are not theirs. Not that abstinence is an euill thing, but to seeke it of our own deuises, and to binde our selues to them as vnto thinges necessary. For tyme, creature, place &c. are the giftes of God, which yet these mẽ will captiuate with their rules and prescriptions. Howbeit they get nothing therby, but sorrow & misery while they afflict their body, & vexe thẽselues

in

in vaine. For thus doe the Charthuſians preſcribe: Eate no fleſhe although thou ſhouldeſt dye therfore. But this is of all other thinges the worſt, that they ſéeke and ſet holynes in theſe doynges. As though the deuill him ſelfe could not on this wiſe bee holy. Whiche neither drinketh wine, nor weareth purple &c.

He ſaith therefore. All theſe thinges would be good for me in déede, either to abſteine, either to eate and drinke, but then are they euill when I put myne owne deuiſe thereto. God appointed neither place, time, meate, nor abſtinence, & we fooles appointe them. One while, I will eate fleſh, an other while I wil not. God him ſelfe ſayth, when ỹ haſt meate, eate it, when thou haſt none abſteine. Wherfore, if thou wilt vſe abſtinence, abide the Lordes deuiſe. For hee can caſt thée in priſon, he can ſend thée hunger, & ſickeneſſe &c. Here vſe thou abſtinence, here haſt thou a rule not preſcribed of thy ſelfe but of God. Now through thine owne deuiſes, thou counterfeiteſt a forme of abſtinence, contrary to Gods appointment. And theſe godly contemners of the world doe ſo refraine from thinges, that

Againſt workes of mãs choyce and deuiſe.

they

they want no maner of thing, and so order the matter that they absteine from nothyng. To be short, euen as by their owne righteousnes they aduaunce them selues aboue God: so by their owne constitutions, they aduaunce them selues aboue all his creatures.

And to gouerne my hart wisely.

wisedome is to want, or be free from foolishnes.

That is to say, I thought to gouerne my selfe, by mine own counsell wisely, and in absteining to seme a wiseman, that I might comprehend wisedome (or folishnesse) for the Hebrue worde is of doubtfull sense, signifiyng some tyme wisdome, some time folishnes, but most commonly folishnes, so the sense is, that I might comprehend what was folishnes, namely, that I might know how to tell other what was wise, what folish: that I might comprehend it, to shunne and auoyde it. For it is the part of wisedome, not onely to knowe that that is good, but also to auoyde that that is euill.

Salomons exercises.

He rehearseth almost a whole beaderolle of his workes, that he exercised to teach others. I beganne (saith he) to assay many wayes, whereby to occupy my selfe,

selfe, in abstayning from wynes & pleasures, so that other by my exãple might learne to liue the better, and the wiselyer to absteyne, and to gouerne their housholde. He speaketh of a worldly and ciuile wisdome, not of the heauenly & spirituall, wherby we vnderstand what dutie we owe vnto God. I began to build, to plant vineyards, I omitted no labour and trauell. &c. but of all my laboures, I reaped nothing but vanitie. Because I would gouerne my selfe after mine own rule and deuise.

It is vanitie for a man to gouerne hym selfe after his owne deuise.

And for a man to rule himselfe after his owne deuise, is but a vanitie, nay he two maner of wayes hurteth himselfe. First he troubled himselfe with his own deuises. Secondly, he attayneth not to that he would, or if he attaine to it, some sorrow fauleth out, that dasheth his deuise. Thus Nero buylded a princely Court of great magnificẽce, but he could not enioy it. For thus it commeth to passe commonly, that one buildeth, and an other possesseth & enioyeth that that is builded, and as the parable in the gospell speaketh, one soweth and an other reapeth. So our Prince Frederike of

Princes deuises are vayne.

famous memory, builded very much, but others haue it in possession. He had a respect to tymes cõming, and was not content with thinges present. When he had builded one house, by and by hee sought to builde an other. This Prince that now is, enioyeth not ẏ houses builded, but buildeth other, fenceth Cities, and hath vtterly a diuerse deuise. And his successour will vndoubtedly be delighted with an other.

Ouermuch care to encrease ryches is reprehended.

These thinges therefore are surely a great vanitie and misery, to be vexed in our workes, with sorrow and care, vntill they be accomplished. When they are ended, to dye, or fall sicke, or some other way to bee depriued of the vse and commoditie of them. And he that succéedeth vs oftentimes, not to vse that we haue done, or to pull it downe. This is the whole course of mans life. God alwayes striueth against mans deuises, and we agayne cõtrary to his. But it is easie for him to destroy whatsoeuer we beginne, yea so great is the vanitie of our hart, that it neuer agréeth long with it selfe, neither can it be so stable, to rest & abyde in his present state. When man hath alsayed

saied, and brought his deuise to passe, yet his curiositie in doing still remayneth, he straight wayes misliketh that he hath done, and proueth an other way, euen as he sayd before: what thing is that that hath beene. &c. Such is the mynde of man after his purpose gotten, as it was before, alwayes vnconstant, and vnquiet. If a man haue one peece of golde, he loketh and coueteth for tenne more. He that hath tenne, desireth an hundred, he that hath a hundred, a thousand. &c. If a Prince haue one Castle commodiously builded, he will haue two. If he haue one kingdome, he ambitiously desireth an other. To be briefe, Alexander desireth to haue many worldes.

The more thou drinkest water, the more thou desirest it.

So commeth it to passe in mens houses, in mariage, and bringing vp of children. Thou deuisest to marry a wyfe, well manered, honest, for thy commoditie, a good houswyfe: but it may chaunce thée to finde a naughty one, altogither of contrary conditions, or els though shée be very honest, that thou mayst wāt many other good properties in her. Thou thinkest how to bring vp thy childrē that they may be honest, & profitable for their

A mās vocation must be applyed, and good successe desired and looked for of God.

countrey. But loe, otherwise then they loked for, they become murtherers, or otherwise wicked, and vnprofitable burthens of the earth. Shall we therfore forsake ỹ charge of houseképing? Because I sée nothing succéedeth according to my diligence, nor aunswerable to my labour and trauels? No. What then? Thou must gouerne thy house, instructe thy familie, bring vp thy children, rule thy wife, but so as it must be without thy appointment & measure, that thou trust not too much in thine owne wisdome. If thy sonne be apte to his booke, let him learne it: if to some handy craft, let him learne it likewise. Onely passe thou not thy boundes, but committe the successe thereof to God. Otherwise thou shalt perceaue the two incommodities spoken of before. Now by these premisses, may easely be vnderstanded the thinges that follow.

I made gorgeous fayre workes, I buylded me houses, and planted vineyardes. I made me orchardes and gardens of pleasure, and planted trees in thē of all maner frutes. I made pooles of water to water the

the greene & frutefull trees withall. I bought ſeruãtes and maydẽs, & ſome I had borne at home. I bought cattle and ſheepe & had more ſubſtance then all they that were before me in Hieruſalem. I gathered togither ſiluer and golde, euen a treaſure of kynges and landes. I prouided mee ſingers and women that playde on inſtruments, to make men mirth and paſtime. I gat me Pſalteries & ſonges of Muſike, and I was greater and in more worſhippe, then all my predeceſſours In Hieruſalem. For wiſdome remayned with me, and looke whatſoeuer myne eyes deſired, I let them haue it, and whatſoeuer my hart delyted, or had any pleaſure in, I withheld it not from it. Thus my hart reioyſed in all that I did, and thys was my portion of all my trauell. But when I cõſidered all my workes that my handes had wrought, and all the labour that I had taken therein, loe, all was but vanitie and vexation of mynde, and nothyng of any value vnder the Sunne.

A rolle or register of Salomons workes.

SAlomon reciteth in this place, a beadrolle, as I sayd of his workes, that he did to procure hym mirth and pleasure, and to well gouerne his house and familie. They are easie to vnderstand by that is aforesayd. I made great or gorgious workes. Which our interpreter speaketh thus by Magnificacie, that is to say, I made notable and great workes, of the which we read the 3. of ỹ kynges, the 3. and 7. chapiters. &c. What profit had I therof? none but paine and trauel, and others the fruite and commoditie.

Paradises, or gardēs of pleasure. The Hebrew worde signifieth A pleasaunt garden, wherein bee faire plottes of floures and most noble rootes.

Seruaūts borne in their maisters houses.

Vernaculos, that is seruaunts borne at mine house. For the children of bondmen, which were borne at home, were called Vernaculi, which alwayes dyd seruice to that maister, whose bondman their father was, whether he were bought with money, or howsoeuer els he became bond. I bought seruaunts and maydens, that is to say, I was a notable husband in gouernaunce of house & familie. I thought to rule my house ac-

cor-

cording to mine owne phantaſie and deuiſe. I gathered ſubſtaunce and treaſure. Whatſoeuer ornamentes and precious apparellings were to be gotten in any countrey, that I furniſhed my ſelfe with, to declare the pompe of my kyngdome, as great & rich kings vſe to doe.

I prouided me ſingers, and women playeng on Inſtrumentes, to make myrth and paſſe tyme.

HEre is a great variaunce amõg Grãmariens what *Schida*, and *Schidoth* is. I trãſlated it, men and women daũſers, but I like it not. I folow them in ỹ meane ſeaſon, that thinke they are inſtrumentes of muſike, and that becauſe of that is ſaid before, where he thus writeth: I prepared me men ſingers and womẽ ſingers, and things that might cheare and ſollace men, that is to ſay, noyſes of inſtruments. He doubleth this word *Schida*, *Veſchidoth*, becauſe perhaps hee would expreſſe the mutuall conſent and ſingyng by courſe that is amõg Muſitians. I was in great auctoritie or worſhyp &c. That is to ſay, all theſe thinges were moſt commodiouſly orde-

red and disposed afterward. And wisedome remayned with me. He vnderstandeth not speculatiue wisedome, but that wisedome that consisteth in good ordering and gouerning these worldly affaires, wherein is included the diuine wisedome. He confesseth that he had not onely abundaunce of thinges, but wisdome also therwith, to administer, rule, and gouerne all thinges well, which is the greatest gift that God giueth man. But it had no successe, because he would haue all thinges, which he had so wisely ordeined procede after his owne deuise &c. where notwithstandyng, this is the saying of all men in the world. It is not as it ought to be, because they see many thinges wisely appointed and ordeined & yet haue no successe &c. The greatest pointe of wisedome therefore is to know this, that successe followeth not, but when God appointeth & that things are gouerned neither by counsell of the wise, nor by temeritie of the foolish.

what wisdome Salomon vnderstãdeth in this place.

And whatsoeuer myne eyes desired, I let them haue it.

The impediments of pleasures.

THat is to say, I went yet farther, and thought to enioye all the thinges. I had

had prepared, but I was not permitted. I ment to make this my portion in this life, but God would not ſuffer me to order theſe pleaſures after mine owne deuiſe, hee alwayes put many ſtumbling blockes in my way. Whē I would haue enioyed my deſires, my gardens, the affaires of the kingdome called me backe, I was faine to ſit downe and giue ſentence according to law and right, I had matters in ſuite to arbitrement, and to determine and take vp ꝛc. Thus I was not able to take my paſtime as I deſired. This ſame very thing happeneth in our Princes, that when they purpoſe to take their delightes, ſome heauy occurrēce falleth out that diſturbeth their ioy, and cauſeth them to ſorrow. Thus doth God alwayes, to ſtoppe and hinder our deuiſes and appointementes. He giueth vs inough to vſe and make mery with, but hee will therewith haue vs to kēepe his Creatures purely and ſincerely in their owne libertie.

Loe all this was but vanitie, and vexation of mynde.

IS not this a great vanitie, for a kyng that hath ſuch abundaunce of gōdes,

and

and plenty of all thinges, and can not yet enioye any one thing of so many according to his owne deuise. And if he chaūce to enioye any of them, yet it is but by stealth. So vnable we are to gouerne, or comprehend thinges after our owne desire. Let euery man therfore freely enioy the thinges present euen as God sendeth them. Let him suffer them to be taken away, and to be giuen him, to goe & to come, according to the Lordes pleasure, when it is good. Let him thinke It may agayne turne to euill, and contrarywise, that hee wallow not and bee drowned in pleasures, as the wicked vse &c.

We must enioye thynges present.

Nothyng of any value vnder the Sunne.

OF his owne deuises man reapeth nothing but trauaile and misery. The Creatures are good, but our desires and deuises are vayne, which prescribe vnto them boundes and rules, whereas they will not be ruled by vs.

Then dyd I turne me, to consider wisedome, errour, and foolishnes. For what is hee among men, that might

might be cõpared to me the kyng, in ſuch workes ? And I ſawe that wiſedome excelleth fooliſhenes, as farre as light doth darkenes. For a wiſe man hath his eyes in his head, but the foole goeth in darkeneſſe. I perceaued alſo that they both had one end.

wiſe mens deuiſes frustrated.

By an other experience he proueth all thinges are but vaine, I meane mans counſels and enterpriſes. Euen (ſayth hee) as it hath happened to me: ſo ſee I it happeneth to others alſo. My deuiſes, & wiſedome were frustrate & in vayne, and could not attayne to that ſucceſſe ẏ I wiſhed. The ſame I perceaued in others likewiſe. I loked vpon other mens wiſedome and folly, and compared them togither. I ſaw how ſome mẽ dealt very wiſely, & went about matters very prudently. I ſaw alſo fooliſh men and harebraynes working without counſell, and yet their folly and temeritie was ſometime fortunate and had good ſucceſſe. Where the counſels of the wiſe came to no effect, and the wiſe men were moſt infortunate, in ſo much that this fole hardynes became a Prouerbe, Fortunc

fauo-

fauoreth fooles.

Examples. Cicero and Demosthenes were most wise men, & had notably appointed their common weales, and made very good lawes, they thought also, ỹ they should haue had good successe, but it fell out otherwise, in somuch that the one sayd of him selfe: O I that was neuer wise, and sometyme iudged in vayne to be that I was not. O Citizēs, how much hath your opinió of me deceaued you. &c. The other broken and worne with age and trauell, sayd, that he wished death rather, then to bee combred agayne with charge of publike affaires, him selfe hauing well tried that matters goe not according to the good counsels of the wise. Cōtrariwise Iulius and Octauius Cæsars, not alway followyng wise, but bold counsels, were much more fortunate. Philip kyng of Macedonia procéeded against Demosthenes deuises, beyng him selfe also more fortunate then wyse.

The successe is not alwayes answerable, to wise mens deuises.

Surely their deuises and counsels were good, but so to vrge thē, to appointe so certeine a successe of thē, was a vaine deuise. For matters will not be taken in

hand

hand by mans deuise. To be brief matters goe not according to the counsell of ỹ wise, nor according heddynes of fooles, that the counsels of the wise might bee prooued foolish, that we should not glory in our selues. Thus in warre straitway the victory is not gotten, albeit the army be neuer so well appointed, & all thinges most wisely forecast and deuised. As not many yeares ago, ỹ Frēch kyng thought to haue had a great victory agaynst the Emperour, but it fell out contrary.

This bee saith therefore: Thou seest that matters succeede aswel with fooles, as with wise men, so ỹ it might appeare there were no difference betweene a foole and a wiseman, as touching successe, yea that it might seeme there were no God that suffreth matters so vnaduisedly to passe. But Salomon answereth, no, but that wisedome farre passeth foolishnesse. True it is that mans wisedome bryngeth not thinges to passe, but God doth it. God by his wisedome can bring to passe what he will, but man can not. For God hath not onely wisedome, but also a power to doe it, so that the thing which hee commaundeth must needes succeede.

Deuises are of men, but successe of God.

This

This man can not doe. To conclude: Gods counsell is not deceaued but mens coũsels how wise soeuer they be, are deceaued. Therfore he sayth very well:

And I saw that wisedome excelleth foolishnesse as farre as light doth darkenes.

Wisdome is very good, but because it lacketh power and strength, it can not bring thinges about, nor rule the successe of them.

A wyse man hath his eyes in hys head, but the foole. &c.

We must not put trust in our owne deuises, and commit the successe of them to God.

I See verely that the lyke happeneth to them both. Our wisedome deceaueth vs, our folishnes deceaueth vs: yet wisdome passeth folishnes. To haue the eyes in the head, is an Hebrew phrase, which wee commonly doe vse to expresse thus. Hee that will playe at cheastes must not hyde his eyes in his purse. Wherby we signifie that he must not onely be skilful in that play, but also haue a diligent eye and care to his play: So he sayth here:

A wise man hath his eyes in his head.

That

That is, they are not onely wise handlers of their matters, but also circumspect and carefull about them, and sée in déede how thinges should be ordred, but can not perfourme and accomplishe the effect. The fole hath not his eyes in hys forehead, because he procédeth rashely, and at all auentures. Howbeit in déede on both sides ỹ matter goeth by fortune, and chaunce, that is, God ruleth the successe, & not according to our circumspection or negligence. Sometimes they fall both, sometyme they prosper both. But God will not that wee shall make any certayne rule thereof. For the creatures are not in our power, but in Gods, who graunteth vs the vse of them, and by our meanes doth what pleaseth hym. That we of our selues adde hereto, in going about to rule the vse of them by our counsels and enterprises, is vayne. He schooleth vs therfore, not to trust in our owne wysdome and counsels, but to doe as occasion serueth, and if it succéde not, to commit it vnto God.

For what man is able to imitate the kyng that made him before. &c.

Here

Hee that made vs, gouerneth vs.

HEre by a godly and apt paraphrasis, he describeth god, as if he should say: God is our king, he hath not onely made vs, but also continually gouerneth vs, so that all thinges happen to vs according to his will. He alone reacheth from the beginning to the end, neyther can any man hinder or stoppe his will & counsell. For this cause thought Salomon to call him a king rather then God. Some men haue wisdome, some folishnes, but no man can imitate his king, nor do that he doth. For what he appointeth commeth to passe, his will and counsell taketh effecte.

And made vs before (to say) that we were.

THe like phrase hath S. Paule: Who first gaue vnto him, and he shal be recompenced? Euen therfore as thys kyng ruleth and gouerneth, all thynges fall out. Hereby therfore he sheweth that our deuises are of no value, because we be made, and be not the kyng. God will not haue vs and his creatures to be ruled by our selues, but contrariwise, or els we should be kynges and rulers ouer

God

God. Nothing succædeth after our wisdome, or folishnes, but many incurre displeasure by folishnes, and more by wisdome, as euen the wyfest of all other men, Dion, Cicero, Brutus, Demosthenes. &c. Because God doth frustrate and delude mans counsels and deuises, to prouoke vs by all meanes to feare him, and to learne to let him alone with the gouernaunce of all thinges, and in nothing to prescribe hym.

And I saw that the successe of both these men were alike.

That is, I sawe, they had both lyke fortune, that as little preuayled the wyse man as the fole. That thinges are gouerned neither by wisedome, nor folishnes, although God suffer thinges to be done by them both, but no rule must be made thereof. For if our coũsell were of force, then should it alway prosper. If folishnes did hurt alwayes, then should it neuer prosper. Marius, Antonius, & diuers other preuayled more by their temeritie and rashnes, then Cicero dyd with his wisdome. And a man shall no where finde more examples of mans fo-

Both wisdome and temeritie, without Gods gouernaunce, is vnhappy

lishnes and wisdome, then among the Romaines and Gentiles. For among ỳ Iewes, warres were taken in hand for the most part, according as the prophets appointed, and God commaunded.

Then sayd I in my mynde, if it happen vnto the foole as it doth vnto me, what neede I labour then any more for wisdome? So I sayde in myne hart, that this also was but vanitie.

We must not trust in our own deuises.

All these wordes tende to this ende, that we should absteine from affiaūce in our owne deuises. I (saith Salomon) gouerned my kingdome most wisely, & I had a Lieftenant or president, which gouerned not so prudently as I, and yet had he good successe. Since therfore I see fooles haue as good successe, or better then I, why trust I to myne owne counsell and wisdome, encreasing but my labour and sorrow.

So I sayd in mine hart this also was but vanitie.

I Founde by experience, that neither wisdome, nor rashenes was to be trusted

ſted. For before it was declared, that wiſdome paſſeth folliſhnes, although things be gouerned neither by folliſhnes nor wiſdome. We muſt holde therefore a meane betwéene both, we muſt commit our matters to the king which made vs. If he offer vs any commoditie, we muſt vſe it: if he geue vs ought, we muſt take it: if he take ought from vs, we muſt ſuffer it. &c. Doe that thou art able, what thou canſt not doe, that let alone. *Looke what thou canſt not lift, let it lye.* So my wiſdome ſhall be profitable vnto me, if I doe that I know pleaſeth God, and leaue to his ordering that he will doe by me. If we would thus doe, then ſhould we be wiſemen in déede.

Our aſſayres muſt be cõmended to ỹ kyng that made vs.

For the wyſe are euer as little in remembraunce as the fooliſhe. For the dayes ſhall come, when all ſhall be forgotten.

BOth that the wiſe man hath done and deuiſed by this counſell, and that the fole hath done through his folliſhneſſe, whether it ſucceéded well or euill, ſhal be forgotten. For neither they themſelues, nor other ſhall be the better for it, that

All things through oblíuion, are buryed & forgottē.

they may learne to committe all thinges vnto God, but their posteritie shall follow their owne wayes, and not be content with the ordinaunces of their Auncestors, but seeke newe deuises, lothyng that they haue, and seeking for that they haue not, dreaming thus. If it once succeeded well with me, it will doe so once agayne. If it did not before succéede, it will now succéede. We wil doe wiselyer then they haue done before vs. &c.

Nothyng is of continuaunce in this world.

Beholde the Romaines cõmon weale, how the Consulles alwayes, and the Emperours afterwarde still repealed their Predecessours Actes, disdayning thinges present and past, and lookyng on thinges to come. Why therefore doest thou take such care, as though thy posteritie would like or allow that thou dost. It will not be. For that men haue, they reiecte as vnprofitable. &c. Therfore it is impossible, that thinges should remaine in the same estimation wyth posteritie, that they were in before.

Lycurgus.

Lycurgus thought he had geuen such lawes to the Lacedemonians, as they would haue kept till he had come backe agayne, that is, for euer. Accordyng to

the

the which deuise, he went his wayes, mynding to returne backe no more, hoping by this meanes, that his lawes should be alwayes obserued, but he nothing preuailed.

Augustus. Augustus sayd he had layd such foundations of a common weale, as he hoped should stand for euer, but they that came after, turned all vp set downe. The people of Rome wished the death of Nero, hoping they should haue had a better cõmon weale. But afterward it went neuer the better with their commõ weale.

Nero.

Salomon. Salomon so gouerned his Realme that he thought it shoulde haue so continued still, and by and by after his death it was deuided. For Roboam which succeeded him, not content with his fathers wyse gouernaunce of the kingdome, rentit in two partes.

Roboam.

And it commeth not onely thus to passe, in externe and ciuile matters, where such folishnes is the more tollerable, because there is but the losse of thinges corporall, but also in religion, and in the word of God, where posteritie alway neglecting the puritie of the doctrine left by our predecessours, seeke

Alteration of common weales and religions.

newe inuentions, euen as they, which now the Gospell is published, not content with the puritie of fayth, & doctrine of the Gospell, raise newe disputations about the Sacramentes, which when it hath bene of any continuaunce, newe sectes will arise without ende. For the flesshe can not be cõtẽted with one plaine and true doctrine.

Salomon speaketh not of persons, but of those things that men do.

Thou must vnderstand that Salomõ speaketh not here of the persons but of the things that men do, whether they be wise or fowlish, because they be neglected. The remembraunce of men indureth in bookes, but not in ordering of the commõ weale, and matters are registred and put in Recordes, but no mã careth or taketh heede to them, neither is posteritie moued with the exampples of their predecessours. Still they deuise new wayes and fashions. That hyeth before them, is lothed, that they haue not is desired. Briefly, to be content with thinges present, is playnely a gift of the holy ghost, a thyng impossible to the flesshe, which alwayes forsaketh thinges present for thinges to come, and whiles it pursueth the one, it loseth the other, defrauding it selfe of the

vse of both. A couetous man lacketh aswell that hee hath, as that hee hath not. And as it fareth with the couetous in money, so fareth it with all mankind in pleasures and deuises &c. that is to say, they haue nothing though they haue all thing. Let Alexander Magnus stand for an example, whose mynde was not satisfied after hee had conquered all Asia. If this be true in outwarde thinges, what maruell is it in matters of the Gospell? That we haue we haue not, because our affection is not settled, but are desirous of other thinges. On the other side Christians haue all things, though they haue nothyng.

And the wyse man dyeth as well as the foole.

THe lyke saying is in the Psalme 49. Wise men also dye and perishe together aswel as the ignoraũt and foolish, and leaue their riches for other. &c. This also is to bee vnderstanded of things that men doe. The wise mã dyeth for all his doynges aswell as the fole. No man regardeth what they weil ordeined. And when thou hast done aswell

as is possible, for thy reward, are all thy doynges disdayned, or els thou art banished or put to death &c. Yea many will contemne thine Actes and repeale them.

Wherefore I was weary of my lyfe because I saw that all thinges done vnder the sunne were naught. For all was but vanitie and vexation of mynde.

THat is, whatsoeuer was done vnder the Sunne did much displease mee, forasmuch as it was naught elles but vaine labour and veration. Not that Salomon wished his death, but for that hee thought it was a miserable case to leade a mās life in such doings. Thus he meaneth: I became weary of it and ouerladen therewith. For who can suffer to haue nothing but labour in diuising and contempt after he hath done. To liue, or life, after the phrase of Scripture, signifieth to liue well and at ease. To leade a perfect life. Psalme 22. No man hath quickened his owne soule, ꝑ is whose soule liued not well. Those that liue euill and a hard lyfe, as poore men that are oppressed and in misery, and appoin-

what this phrase, to lyue, signifieth.

ted

ted to dye. Of these it is sayd in the scriptures, they liue not. Therefore he sayth not, he desireth death, but that this trade of life wherein men are so wearyed and vered with their owne deuises, displeaseth him.

Salomon meaneth that wee should stand in a readines whether life or death betyde, and calleth vs backe to the vse of thinges present, because we should bee content with them without care of hereafter, and commit all thinges vnto God, who will worke by vs, as it were vnwitting to vs. Euē as the Oxe that treadeth out the corne and eateth, knoweth not what he doth, nor is carefull for his liuing or labour: so must wee doe, that God offreth vs, and suffer that hee will haue done. Yet all these thinges must be but as a morsell of bread, which we haue here on earth, that we loke not by our owne deuises to garnishe this life, for then shall we alwayes bee vnquyet, as foloweth: How we must lyue.

And I was weary of all my labour which I had takē vnder the sunne, because I should be fayne to leaue them to an other man that commeth

meth after me, who whether hee shal be a wise mã or a foole I know not. And yet shall he be Lord of all my labours.

The life of man is miserable.

THis sentence is all one with ỹ aboue. Salomon floweth in wordes, & copiously treateth of this place. Thus (sayth he) I am weary of my life: for albeit I haue ordered all thinges after the best way that can be deuised, yet know I not whether mine heyre shall be wise or foolish. If he happen to be wise, hee will set light by that I haue done, and inuent an other thyng, seeyng I my selfe many times mislike mine owne doinges, & am desirous of other. If he be a foole, he will destroy that I haue done, and take as much paynes in pullyng downe, as I toke in setting vp, according to the Prouerbe, *One buildeth, another pulleth down.* So Octauius Cæsar beautified the Citie of Rome, Nero defaced it. Pompey brought great masses of money into the treasure house, meaning it should serue for the benefite of the common weale. Cæsar after that toke it away, and it became rather a destruction then any benefite to the commõ weale. Therfore whether

ther mine heyre ſhall be wiſe or foliſh, in vaine haue I trauelled, and ſpent my lyfe in vayne cares, hauyng an eye to thinges to come, and not vſing thinges preſent, and therfore he addeth:

So I turned me to refrayne my mynde, from ſuch trauell as I had take vnder the ſunne. For ſo much as a man ſhould weary hym ſelfe with wiſedome, with vnderſtandyng, and induſtrie, & yet be fayne to leaue his labours to an other, that neuer ſwet for them. This alſo is a vayne thyng and great miſerie. For what getteth a man of all the labour & trauell of his mynde, that hee taketh vnder the ſunne, but heauines, ſorow, and diſquietneſſe all the dayes of his lyfe. In ſo much that his hart can not reſt in the night. This is alſo a vayne thyng.

I Ceaſſed (ſayth hee) to take any more care for theſe worldly affaires. This is the ſayting of a wiſe man whiche calleth backe his minde from cares, to reſt and quyet. I will be content with thinges preſent,

We muſt not be carefull for to morrow.

sent, and I will doe and suffer forthwith that God willeth me, neither will I care for to morow. This is the conclusion which afterward he amplifieth copiously, saying:

For when a man hath wearied himselfe, with wisedome, vnderstandyng, and diligence &c.

HEre you see what he vnderstãdeth by wisedome, not speculation, but the rule and gouernaunce of matters, industrie, or congruence of doing, Industry or dexteritie in doyng of thyngs. When all things are done in order and in time. Eue as he appointed twelue Captaines ouer the land, their dyet, and horses &c. This hee calleth to weary him selfe in wisedome. This wearysomnes and portion he leaueth to a man that hath taken no paines in the same, yea that more vnhappie is, to a man that careth not for it, and forgetteth it. When I haue taken all this paine saith hee, I leaue it to one that contemneth it, or spoileth it, which thing surely is a great vanitie.

For what getteth a man of all hys trauell &c. This is but copy &c. Nor can rest in the night.

HIs hart is not at any reſt, no not in the night while he paineth him ſelfe, not onely in ỹ day time to bring his deuiſe trimely to paſſe, but when he hath finiſhed it, ſtudieth in the night, how to preſerue and encreaſe it.

Is it not better therefore for a man to eate and drinke, and his ſoule to be mery in his labour?

THis is the principall concluſion, yea the coũſell of the whole booke, which he often hereafter repeateth. And this is a notable place for the expoũding of that is gone before, and that that followeth. Thus he cõſenteth with that that is ſayd afore. These pleaſures are to bee cõdemned that we of our owne heades and deuiſe prepare for the time to come. Thoſe trauels and paines to be condẽned which we vndertake of our owne phãtaſie and braine. But the pleaſures and trauels that God ſendeth are good, & to be vſed as they come without care of pleaſure, or deration after to enſue. But who cã thus doe. It is very well ſayd, but we doe not that that is ſo wiſely propoſed, we heare it as though we heard it not, and ſee it as

The principall concluſion of the whole booke.

though

though we saw it not, and no man followeth it. For we are drowned in ỹ care of making preparation and compassing of our owne affaires. Our hart cã brooke no good counsell, but is vexed euery day more and more. The godly cast frõ them all cares. All other men leade a disquiet life, euen till they dye. He saith therfore:

I saw that this was a gift of God.

True mirth or ioye is the gift of god.

A Notable saying & singular doctrine, but yet he lesse vrgeth this saying thẽ that before. Which commeth to passe by reason the affirmatiue moueth vs not so much as the negatiue, euen as this affirmatiue: I am the Lorde thy God which brought thee out of the land of Ægipt, it is quickly sayd, but it doth not much moue vs. In the negatiue there is greater force. Thou shalt haue none other Gods in my sight. &c. So in this place, he briefely handleth this affirmatiue. It is good for a man to eate and drinke. &c. but in the negatiue, he is very long to shewe and proue vnto vs our folly; namely, that we nothyng preuaile with all our trauels & deuises, because we are troubled

with

with cares, and vſe not thinges preſent. So vnto theſe groſſe headed men, it is requiſite he ſpake groſſely, and at large. For vnto wiſe men, all might be ſayd in one worde: The Lord himſelfe is thy God.&c.

For who hath eaten, or done more thinges abroad then I?

HE alleageth his experience. For if I which haue done ſo great thynges, and haue ſo abounded in all maner of riches, haue not atteyned to my wyſhe & deſier, how much leſſe ſhall other doe ſo, if God geue not mirth and ioye?

God geueth to the mã that is good before him, wiſdome, vnderſtanding, and gladneſſe. But vnto the ſinner he geueth wearines and ſuperfluous care, that he may gather and heape togither the thyng that afterward ſhalbe geuen vnto hym, whom it pleaſeth God. Wherfore, this alſo is a vanitie and vexation of the mynde.

THat it is the gift of God to be cõtent with thinges preſent, he proueth.

Be-

The godly vse their goodes & peace and myrth: but the vngodly haue no peace.

Because it is geuen without any merits of ours going before, to that man whom God lyketh. He deuideth the world into godly and vngodly. Vnto the godly, beside the giftes that they haue lyke vnto others, chiefly prudence and wisedome, is geuen mirth also, because they be content with thinges present, they are not troubled with thoughtes and desires of the minde as the wicked are. That they haue knowledge, and are wise in doyng their busines. &c. their knowledge is in mirth and peace, but the wicked haue trouble and veratiō, alwayes gathering together more and more, and neuer be satisfied. Moreouer, although they haue wisdome and industrye, yet it is so mixt with sorow, that they are rather a paine to them, so that they can not enioy their trauell, but till the ground and buylde, and other receaue the pleasure and commoditie of it. But that the wicked trauell in and buylde, none vseth well but the godly. So those thinges that Princes gather together, are the goods of the godly, because they onely vse them mearily and with thankes geuing, although they haue but a litle. The wicked haue

much

much, and yet they vse it not, but haue therwith great care and vexation. To be short, the godly truely haue the whole worlde, because they haue ioye and tranquilitie. The vngodly in hauing it, haue it not. This is the vanitie that the vngodly haue.

The third Chapter.

To all thinges there is an appointed tyme, and a tyme to euery purpose vnder the heauen.

AND here Salomon (as hath bene declared before) speaketh of mans workes, that is to say, such as are taken in hand of mans wisdome and counsell. This the interpreters not marking, thinke that he speaketh in this place of the corrupting of Gods creatures. Thus therefore vnderstand, that all mans workes and deuises haue their certaine and appointed season of doing, beginning and endyng, beyond mans power & habilitie, so that he speaketh against frée will, because it is not in our power, to appoint ỳ tyme,

All the workes of man haue a tyme to be begon, to be done, & to be finished in.

the meane, and the effect of our assayres, and that our enterprises and endeuours herein are vtterly frustrated, but that all thinges goe and come when God appointeth. This he proueth by the examples of mens workes, which are ordred beside and aboue mans appointment, so that hereof he concludeth, that men are troubled in vaine with their owne deuises, and can bring nothing to passe, for all they can doe, vntill that time & houre commeth, that God appointeth. Hereto belongeth that saying in the Gospell: The houre is not yet come. Agayne: A woman while she is in trauell hath paine and sorrow, because her houre is come. Thus the power of God comprehendeth all thinges vnder their appointed houres and seasons, so that no man can let or hinder them.

How we be rulers & Lordes of Gods creatures.

But thou wilt say. How then is man made ruler ouer all thinges *Gene.* 2. if he be not able to gouerne them at his pleasure, and to vse them accordyng to his desier? I aunswere: we be so made gouerners of these creatures, as to vse thē for the tyme present. But we are not able to rule them with our cares and trauels

tuels. No man with all his deuiſes, can compaſſe any thing for the time to come. For he that is vncertaine of thinges to come, how can he take order for thinges to come. Therfore God will haue vs to vſe his creatures frælye, as he geueth thē, without preſcribing of tyme, meane, or houre. For theſe thinges are in ỹ hand of God, ſo that we muſt not thinke it is in our power, to vſe thinges when wee will, vnles he graunt it. For this cauſe Ieſus the ſonne of Sirach ſayth: God left man in the hand of his counſell, but he gaue him preceptes and commaundementes, whereby to moderate his deuiſes and doinges. &c.

All thinges haue their tyme.

THat is, their appointed houre and ſeaſon, which if man paſſe and goe beyond, and will bring all thinges about after his owne wayes and deuiſes, hee ſhall reape nought but vanitie thereof. Many men labour to ware riche, but they preuaile not. Other are enriched, yea without any labour. Becauſe God hath appointed that houre, for the one, and not for the other.

And euery purpose.&c.

IN the Hebrew it is Hephetz, which commonly is translated pleasure, or desire. We thinketh it may handsomely be translated delight, as in the 2. Psalm: his delight is in the law of the Lord. For Hephetz signifieth, *that which a mã doth apply himselfe vnto, & deliteth in.* That desire that a man hath to fulfil the law. But euen herein also, all ỹ things that men wishe and desier, they labour and would faine haue thẽ, but they vere thẽselues onely, because they can not attaine to that houre & season, which they goe about to preuent, and therefore they get nothing. Therefore thinges must simply and plainely be committed vnto God, and we must vse thinges present, and abstaine from desier of thinges to come. And if we deale otherwise, wee shall reape nothing but labour & trauell.

There is a tyme to be borne, and a tyme to dye.

Man is no Lord, but a bayliue of his lyfe.

HE prooueth the thing he hath spoken by examples of mans deuises and occurrencies. Our birth hath his tyme, sayth he, and likewise our death. And

euen

euen as we haue not our birthes in our power, no more haue we our deathes, and yet nothing is more ours then our lyfe, and all our members, but onely to vse them. But wee haue no power or Lordship geuen vs ouer thē, not for one minutes space, and therfore in vayne we seeke to prescribe them rules or lawes. The infant is in the hand of God, & can not be borne before his houre commeth. The women labour and are very carefull about the byrth of it, and tell when it will come, but there is no certainty in their saying. No more can we die, be we in neuer so extreame daunger and desperation, but when our houre is come. Why then feare we death? Thou canst liue no lōger then God hath appointed, nor dye any soner then he appointeth. For thus sayth *Iob*. 14. Mās time is determined, and the number of hys monthes is with thee: thou hast appointed hym his boundes, which he can not passe.

But thou wilt say, many perishe wilfully, and through their owne temeritie, which might otherwise liue lōger. Some breake their owne neckes. &c. Euery mā is apointed his certein houre ta dye in.

Could they not haue saued their lyues? I aunswere, No. God appointed that houre, those meanes, and that kynde of death, as dayly experience teacheth vs. Some are deadly wounded, and are easely healed and liue, some other are scarsly scratched, and yet dye of it. The Astrologers ascribe these thinges to the Planets, other attribute it to fortune. But the holy Scripture ascribeth it vnto god, in whose handes are layde vp all the minutes of our liues and deathes, wyth whom it is all one, whether thou dye of a greuous wounde, or of a litle scratch, because he will cõfound all más wisdom & deuises. But to ỹ true Christians this is a great comfort, because they know death is not in the power of Tyrauntes, nor of any creature, & because they shuld not bee ouer carefull about death, but should dye like children whẽ God so appointeth. Therfore as he pronounceth of the condition of our byrth and dyeng: euen so may we say of all other affaires of men, as it foloweth:

A tyme to plant, and a tyme to plucke vp.

These

THese be workes of mans lyfe, and yet no more in our power, then our lyfe it selfe. In the spring, we plant and set, in harueſt we pull vp againe. All things are to be done as God hath appointed & ordeined, and none otherwise.

A tyme to slea, and a time to heale: a time to breake downe, & a time to buylde, a tyme to weepe, and a tyme to laughe: a time to mourne, and a tyme to daunce: a tyme to cast away stones, and a tyme to gather stones: a tyme to embrace, & a tyme to abstaine frō embracyng: a time to seeke, and a tyme to lose: a tyme to keepe, and a tyme to cast away: a tyme to reape, and a tyme to sow: a tyme to keepe silence, and a tyme to speake: a tyme to loue, & a time to hate: a time of warre, and a tyme of peace.

TO this roll belongeth experiēce to be applied to the whole course of mans life. For here it cōmeth to passe, that one soweth, another reapeth, one gathereth together, an other wasteth and spēdeth. To be brief, Euery worke of mans lyfe

we must vse ỹ goods that God hath geuen vs.

hath his appointed season out of ỹ which what soeuer man doth, hee laboureth in vayne & prevaileth not. There is a time to wepe, & a tyme to laugh. Many times it chaunceth that when we meane to be merryest, some great trouble marreth all. Therfore mirth hath also her tyme and season. Experience teacheth vs all these things, that we (I say) can do nothing accordyng to our appointementes, but as time serueth vs to do them. Therfore let vs not trouble our selues about thinges to come, but vse thinges present.

What profite hath he that worketh of the thyng wherin he trauelleth?

That is to say, vnles times and opportunitie serue him, he shal do no good. The maker of a thing hath nothing but his time and season. Till this commeth, he can do nothing. If the houre be hit so doth he likewise hit it.

I haue seene the trauell that God hath geuen the sonnes of men, to humble them therby.

This is a declaration of the thinges gone before. In all these thynges saith

ſaith hee, I haue ſeene that men can doe naught of them ſelues, vnles their houre be come. And they that wil preuent their houre are troubled with ſorrow & care: ſo that their own experience teacheth thē to abſteine from care for things to come, and to vſe thoſe thynges they haue.

For God hath made all thynges beautifull in their time and ſeaſon.

THis now is ẏ other part. They that wayte not their time are troubled & vexed. Agayne, they that abide it, finde much comfort therein. For euery thyng that God doth, and that is done by God, the gift is pleaſaunt in his ſeaſon. That is: whē the hart is voyde of cares, & then hath ſome commoditie or pleaſaunt ſight happenyng to it, that greatly delighteth it. Therefore ſuch men reape pleaſure, where other gather affliction and vexation, bycauſe they doe their things in the tyme that God appointeth.

God appointeth all men a tyme and ſeaſon.

Alſo he hath ſet the world in theyr hart, yet can not man finde out the worke that God hath wrought frō the begynnyng to the end.

This

Men cānot enioye the things that god geueth them.

THis is a confirmation of the thynges gone before. Although (sayth he) God hath set the world in their hart, yet are they not able to gouerne it through their own coūsels. This is an Hebrue phrase, to giue or speake to the hart, for to giue or speake fayre or mearily. This is it he would say. God doth not onely set the world in their power, wherby they may vse the thinges present, but also setteth in their hart, that they may vse it with pleasure and ioye. That they may haue both ioye and pleasure of it. And yet man knoweth not when his worke shall begin or end, when or how long he shall enioy it. Therfore man must be content, that hath the world in his vse.

They that are content with their state, vse their goods present.

Paule speaketh in a like phrase *Act.* 14. And surely he lefte not him selfe without witnes, in that he dyd good, and gaue vs rayne from heauen, and frutefull seasons, fillyng our hartes with foode and gladnes. And in an other place: Which ministreth to vs all thinges abundantly. This ioy hath the Christian and euery one might haue it, if he could be contented with things present. Well saith S. Hierome in his Pro-

logue

logue vpon the Bible. To him that trusteth in God, all the world is in stede of riches. But a faithlesse body hath neede euen of an halfe peny, accordyng to the Prouerbe: A couetous body wanteth aswel that hee hath, as that he hath not. The saying of S. Hierome.

¶ But man findeth not out the worke. &c.

That is to say, man can not know, would he neuer so much vexe him self there about, when God wil do him good, when to begin, or when to make an end. Euen as no man is able to search out, or declare ý houre when any shal be borne, how long they shall liue, or when they shall dye, study they neuer so much. We must therfore say: Lord, it is in thy power to giue thinges for the time to come, in the meane season I will reioyce in that thou hast giuē me, and in that thing ý is present. Thus ý other actiōs of mās life, wherof he hath rehearsed a great many, are not in mans power. For if it were, some men would alway make warre, other woulde alwayes geue themselues to gaming, other woulde alwayes bee occupied in buylding &c. Because many men

Thinges to come, must be commēded to God, & things present must be enioyed.

men giue thē ſelues hereunto. Therfore all the world is ours, onely we muſt not preſcribe God any time or manner how we will vſe them. I will not (ſaith God) be meaſured according to your deuiſes, for ſo ſhould all thinges be at your commaundement, and I alſo. He concludeth therfore as in the chapiter gone before.

And I know that there is nothyng good in them, but to reioyce and to doe good in his lyfe. And alſo that euery man eateth and drinketh, and ſeeth the cōmoditie of al his labour, this is the gift of God.

What is moſt pleaſaunt to a man.

These thinges are well inough vnderſtode by the premiſſes. For this hee meaneth to ſay. There is nothing better for a man in theſe miſerable caſes, then to enioye the thinges preſent, and to be mery at his hart, without care and ſtudy of thinges to come. But this is the gift of God that a man can ſo doe. I am able (ſaith he) to teach ỹ what to do, but to do it my ſelfe, or to giue the power to do it, I am not able. He ſheweth both what is to be done, & where ỹ we muſt doe is to be receaued. He declareth that our cares

doe

doe onely vexe and molest vs, but he teacheth vs that we must call vpon God, to remoue away these cares, and to giue vs good successe and peace of minde.

I know that whatsoeuer God shall doe, shall be for euer: to it can no man adde, and from it cá none diminish. For God hath done it, that they should feare before him.

THis is to say, I saw that all thinges that God doth, endure for euer. As for our workes, they be vaine and vncertaine. And this antithesis or coũterpoint is to be wel marked. God only (saith he) can bring his purpose to passe, & appoint them in their tymes. Looke to whom he giueth the gift to enioy thinges present, he hath it. He is faithfull and sure. That he geueth, no man can take away. If he giue life, no man can bereue vs of it, although the world and Sathan rage and raue. For he is sure and euerlasting. If he giue me good eyes, I shall kepe them notwithstanding Sathan would throwe all the dust of the earth into them. If he wil graunt me strong, and whole armes and legges, no man shall be able to take them

Gods workes are stable, but mans fraile & vnsure.

them from mee. All our woꝛkes haue their tyme and houre oꝛdeyned, which we can not appointe. Who then? God himselfe appointeth the houre, and not foꝛtune and destinie, as ỹ Philosophers suppose. When he suffreth the houre to come which oꝛdeyned it, then it cõmeth.

Therefoꝛe will God haue the woꝛkes of men to be vncertaine, because, he he will be feared.

Why then doth he so trouble mẽ with this vaine cogitatiõ, reseruing all times and seasons to himselfe? Therfoꝛe (saith Salomon) because he would be feared, because we shoulde not be rashe in our businesses, noꝛ attempt any thing pꝛoudly and pꝛesumptuously as of our selues, as Paule also teacheth vs: Walkyng in feare, knowing that it is not in mans will and endeuour, because it is hee that worketh both the will and perfourmaunce. Hee that beléeueth these thinges, that is, that our affayꝛes lye not in our owne powꝛer, hee doth nothing rashely. He attributeth all to God that woꝛketh it, and lꝏketh foꝛ it at his hãd. If he graunt it, he enioyeth it, if not, hee can be contented to lacke it. If he take it from him, he beareth it. Thus remaineth the gloꝛy of God, the humbling of our selues, and the true woꝛship of God

in

in vs. For this is the feare of God, to set God in our sight, to know that he is the beholder of all our workes, and the author of all prosperitie and aduersitie.

That that hath beene, is also nowe, and that that shall be, hath beene already, and God requireth the thinges that are past.

Before in the first Chapiter, he sayde: What is that that hath beene? that that is to come. &c. Because in that place, he spake of mens workes and doinges, here in this place, he speaketh of Gods. Mans mynde can not content it selfe with the thinges it hath, but still wisheth for the thinges to come. And when those thinges are come that it wisheth, it is not contented neither, but againe desireth other thinges, so that it is neuer satisfied. For this is the condition of the hart of man, alwayes to gape after future thinges, and neuer to bee filled. But God procedeth after a cõtrary sort and maner. For that that hath bene with him, is yet still: that is to say: hee turneth him not to thinges to come. For thus saith the Scripture of him. He beholde

The difference betweene the workes of God, and man.

helde all the thinges he made, & they were very good. God resteth in the worke that he maketh, and doth not so hop and leape to the desier of thynges to come, as mans mynde doth. And they ỹ walke according to Gods appointment, doe euen lyke: their heades stretch not to future thinges, conteining things present. The godly person laboureth & worketh after a constant sort, and constantly enioyeth the thing that God sendeth.

Because God requireth the things that are past.

Gods workes & mans are not all one.

HE compareth (as I sayd before) gods doinges and maners togither wyth mans, by way of an Antithesis, or cõterpointing. Our study is to neglect and set light of the thinges we haue, and to beholde and waite for the things we shal haue. But God pursueth the thyng that is, and perseuereth in his worke, that ỹ thing he doth, may be stable and cõstant. In lyke sort are the studies of those that are godly. This is it he would say. Eue when man goeth about to let or hynder Gods worke, yet God seeketh how to defend and maintaine that worke that mã goeth

goeth about to hinder and let. &c. God appointed Dauid to be king: Abſolon perſecuted him, and went about to let it. But God agayne reſtored that that Abſoló would haue letted. The things that God appointeth are not ſo inconſtãt and fickle as mans deuiſes. For God doth not abhorre and lothe hys owne counſels.

Moreouer, I ſaw vnder the Sunne, the place of iudgemẽt, where was wickednes, and the place of iuſtice wher was iniquitie. And I thought in myne hart, God will iudge the iuſt and the wicked: for there is a tyme for euery worke & purpoſe.

Vnrighteouſnes in common weales.

WHat ſhould I ſpeake of the vices & vanitie of mans deuiſes, where as euen in the place of iudgement, that is, where iuſtice and lawe ſhould be adminiſtred, wicked men and vngodlines doe raigne. And Salomó doth not ſo much complayne, that vngodlynes is in the place of iudgement, as that it can not in that place be amended and corrected: as though he ſhould ſay. All thinges are vtterly ſo vayne, that the care of correcting

this vnrighteousnes of officers, doth no good. When I saw this wickednes, I thought to correct it, but I founde that I was not able, till God would correct it.

The saying of Frederike Duke of Saxony.

So our Prince Frederike was wont to say: *The longer I gouerne, the lesse I knowe how to gouerne.* Againe: *Where shall I at length finde him that I may trust?* See in the courtes of all princes, how notwithstanding there be diuers good men that wishe well to the common weale, and geeue good counsell thereunto, yet wyll there be alwayes some founde, that will dashe and trouble all their counsels and deuises. Such therefore, and so great is the malice and naughtines of man, that man is not able to amende and correcte all men.

Salomons meaning therfore is, that if a man would breake his brayne to correct all men, he should reape nothing but trauell and care of his doing. Therfore the matter must be committed to God, and such stones taken and lifted vp, as we are able to reare and welde. That that will not be reared let it lye still. I (sayth he) that was a wise king, ouer an holy people, and a diligent setter for-

ward

ward of righteousnes, was compelled to suffer wicked persons to bée in publike office. For although I had displaced and put certaine of them out of office: yet alwayes would some other proue the like. Then how will it fall out with other Princes. Therefore it is the best to doe that God appointeth, and the rest to cõmit vnto him, which in his tyme shall iudge both the righteous and vnrighteous. For men will not, nor can not, although they were neuer so willing.

There is a tyme for euery worke and purpose.

ALl things (sayth he) haue their time. Vices can not be corrected, vntil that appointed time & season come. In vaine therefore doe we goe about to preuent that time, by our amending of all things afore that tyme. In so much that my enterprise succeeded not in myne officers. I did what I was able, I corrected as much as I could, the rest I committed vnto God.

I considered in myne hart the state of the children of men, that God

hath purged them: yet, to see to, they are in themselues as beastes. For the condition of the children of mẽ, and the cõdition of beastes are euen as one. As the one dyeth: so dyeth the other.

A cõplaint of the confusion of mans lyfe to the outward sight, agaynste which the worde of God must be set. Forther is a difference betwene the godly & vngodly.

THis place is somewhat obscure, not so much of it selfe, as through the default of the expositours, which greatly trouble themselues, while they suppose for the most part that Salomõ speaketh in the presence of the vngodly: but thys is but a colde inuention and supposall, although a receaued. Wẽ thinketh the sence is to be taken plainely. He maketh a maner of a Sermõ or collation of más wayes and deuises, that they are all but vayne. At length he commeth to ỹ trouble and veration, that is in officers, how they which ought to be a rule & ensample to other, are also vaine them selues. So of speciall propositions going before, he descendeth to generall. What shall I say or speake of singular estates, of persons, when we be all as beastes: Is not this a miserable case among mẽ: Wherin differ they from beastes, which haue no remembraunce or feeling of God:

But

But here riſeth a queſtion. Wherefore he compareth men with beaſtes, whereas before he taught vs there was a religion and feare of God, and a life euerlaſting after this life. Which thing hath moſt troubled the expoſitours. The aunwere is ſhorte. The interpretours doe not here marke the ſcope and drift of the booke, neyther doe they remēber (which thing yet Salomon doth often repeate) that he ſpeaketh of the things vnder the Sunne, which in the newe Teſtament, and more commonly is ſayd, in ỹ world. For this booke maketh a difference betwen a godly life, & the life that is led in the world, or vnder the ſunne. To haue a chearefull hart, and to ioye in ỹ things that God gēueth vs, in the feare of god, is nothing of the worlde, but a gifte of God from heauen, and aboue the ſunne. But to be vered with the care of worldely thynges, is a beaſtly ſtate and condition.

The ſtate (or faſhion) of the children of men.

IN the Hebrew toung this word is of a large ſignification, but as it is here

vsed, it signifieth a fashion, māner, order, conuersation, as in the Psalme. 109. Thou art a Priest for euer, after the order, or fashion of Melchisedech. I thinke it signifieth properly a guise, or manner. The Epistle to the Hebrewes doth notably handle this worde of the Psalme. For euen as Melchisedech (saith he) had neither father nor mother &c: euen so and in like sorte &c. It commeth of this worde *Dabar*, whiche is a thing or cause. It signifieth therfore a fashion, or manner, so that the meanyng is: I considered in myne hart the māner or fashion of mans life. **After what sort men behaue them selues on earth.** What successe men haue in their doynges, and how they behaue them selues.

For the condition of the childrē of men, and of beastes are all as one.

THat is the like things happen to mē, as doe vnto beastes. He meaneth mā passeth vp & down this life as the beastes doe, and getteth no more by his life, then doe the beastes.

As the beastes dye, so dye men.

He

HE speaketh of the houre of death, not of the kinde. That is, as the houre of the beasts death is vncertaine, so is the houre of mãs. A beast knoweth not whẽ he shal fall sicke or be whole, or when he shal dye, no more knoweth a man. Why therefore are we so proude? Since wee know no more when we shall dye, then doth the beast? The houre of death is vncertaine.

For they haue all one breath, and there is no excellency of mã aboue the beast. For all is vanitie. All goe to one place, & all was of the dust, and all shall returne to the dust.

THis place can not be wrested to the mortalitie of the soule, because he speaketh of things vnder the sunne. Certes the worlde can not perceaue, nor beleue that the soule is immortall. But if a man regarde the likenes that Salomõ speaketh of, man dyeth lyke as the beast doth, & breatheth euen as the beast doth. In a kynde of likenes therfore we be all one. The Philosophers reasoned in deede of the immortalitie of the soule, but so coldly, that they may seeme to haue done nothyng but trifle, but Aristotle It seemeth that men & beastes haue both one kinde of death, but there is yet a great difference: for ỹ soules are immortal, & the bodies of men shall be reuiued.

chiefly so disputeth of ỹ soule, that in all places hee taketh circumspect hæde that he reason not of the immortalitie therof, and would not expresse what his meanyng was. Plato reported rather what other men sayd, then what him selfe thought. For the immortalitie therof cã be prœued by no reason of man, because it is a thing beyond the sunne, to beleue the soule is immortall. In the world it is not seene, nor vnderstanded for a certeinty, that ỹ minde of mã is immortall.

All goe to one place &c.

All thyngs liuyng shall returne into dust of ỹ earth.

THat is, vnles the Lord gaue his spirite vnto man no man could say, that man differed any thyng from the beast. For man and beast are made both of one matter, of dust, and returne agayne also into that dust. And the returning agayne into the same thing or place, is an argument of likenes betwene man and beast. Not that it is so in dæde, but because the worlde according to the likenes falling out betwen them so supposeth, & can not suppose otherwise. Therefore to hold or beleue otherwise, is required an higher matter, then is the world.

Wher-

Wherby he tryeth them.

THe Hebrew worde ſignifieth to puryfie or chooſe. God ſayth he, ſuffreth both man and beaſt, all after one ſorte and faſhion to come into the worlde, and to goe out of the worlde. But this he ſuffreth to trye whether men will onely regarde theſe outward appearaunces, and be led with the argumentes of the wicked, & beleue none other thyng. The godly by theſe thinges are ſo exercyſed that their fayth is the more increaſed. They paſſe out of this worlde in deede, as doe the wicked and the beaſtes, but in their hart and ſpirite they are comforted and at quyet.

When in their miſeries are cõforted with hope of eternall lyfe.

Who knoweth whether the ſpirite of man aſcende vpwarde, and the ſpirite of the beaſt deſcend downward vnto the earth?

TEll me plainely (ſaith he) of one mã, not of the godly, but of thoſe that are vnder the ſunne, or in the worlde, which can affirme that the ſoule ſhall liue after this life, conſidering he ſeeth the lyfe of mã and beaſt to differre in nothing. For aſſoone as their breath faileth them, they dye both. This no man knoweth. But in that

The vngodly doubte of the immortalitie of the ſoule.

that we know it, we know it not as mē, but as the sonnes of God, and aboue the sunne, as who haue our conuersation in heauenly thinges, and belong vnto heauē. In the world this knowledge is not, neither is there any peace, but all things come to passe as with beastes. There were in Grēce most excellent wyttes, which yet neuer vttered any sound learning touchyng this matter. Lucian a mā of a sharpe and pleasaunt wyt disputeth earnestly hereof, but scoffing onely at the Philosophers opinions of the soule.

¶ Therefore I see that there is nothing better, then that a mā should reioyse in his affaires, because that is his portion. For who shall bryng him to see, what shall be after him?

The opinion of godly men which beleeue the immortalitie of the soule.

This is the opinion of those that be godly, for they haue taken holde of this doctrine. The vngodly are vexed with the likenes and similitude betwene vs and beastes, and can finde nothing but vanity in their trauels. For this doctrine they neither know, nor beleeue, for reason can not persuade it them. And by this place is all the whole heape of Philosophers

phers conuinced, gathering many things together touching the immortalitie of ỹ ſoule, which they beleue not. This therfore is the portion of the godly, to enioy the things preſẽt, and not to be troubled with things to come. But this commeth not to paſſe vnder the ſunne. They that doe otherwiſe clogge them ſelues with double incommoditie, they enioy not the thinges preſent, nor attaine not to the thinges to come, and it happeneth vnto them as vnto Æſopes dog, that ſnatched at the ſhadow, & loſt his meate. So theſe men loth the thinges preſent, and ſeeke for other thinges. Thus hetherto Salomõ hath diſcourſed moſt in generalities of ỹ vanities of this worlde: now follow certein particulars.

The fourth Chapiter.

So I turned and conſidered all the oppreſsions that are wrought vnder the ſunne: & behold, the teares of the oppreſſed, and none cõforteth them, nor deliuered them out of the hãdes of their oppreſſours, to comfort them.

Hether-

A cõplainte of the miserie of mans lyfe from which (wout ỹ helpe of God, hee can not be deliuered.

HEtherto Salomon hath rekoned the vaine deuises of men. By reason that God hindreth and letteth them, namely how those things onely, which God doth and appointeth, atteine & come to their end, and can not be letted or hindred. Now hencefoorth he reckoneth the impedimẽts of mens deuises, that is, the meanes and causes, whereby God vseth to reuoke vs from our counsels and deuises, compelling vs to vse those thinges that we presently haue. I saw (sayth he) that neither Princes nor Magistrates are hable to take awaye violence and iniurie from among men, yea God setteth naughty disposed mẽ in their way, from whom they can not be deliuered. Dauid beyng a very good prince minded to profite and doe good to the commõ weale, but Ioab and Absolon did hinder & let him. He went about to make Ioab out of the way, but he was not able. Thus haue Princes their hinderers and disturbers, whõ yet they are compelled to suffer, and by whõ God hindreth the deuises of the wise. I saw also how Iudges were corrupted & bribed, and how tyrantes oppressed the

Sclander, or reproche.

Oppression of good mẽ.

widowes

widowes, and fatherles children &c. And ſurely greater is the violence and fearcenes of man, then any man is able to rule and correct, but God alone.

Wherefore I prayſed thoſe that are dead, aboue thoſe that are lyuyng, and I coũted him that yet was vnborne better then them both. For he hath not ſeene the euill workes that are wrought vnder the ſunne.

HEre againe theſe fine witted mẽ diſpute, as though Salomon ſpoke like an vngodly man, that preferred the dead before the liuing. Albeit Auguſtine treating of ỹ place of S. John: (It had been better for that man that he had neuer beene borne.) ſayth: It were better for a man to be in euill caſe, then to haue no being at all. Howbeit theſe men deale ſophiſtically. Damned & myſerable creatures thus thinke and iudge, as Salomon here ſayth: For vndoubtedly, they had rather not to be at all, then to be continually ſo tormented, and thys in dæde were better for them. Therfore Salomon ſayth well in this place. If we conſider the miſeries & afflictions of mẽ, and

If ỹ godly had no conſolatiõ, it were better not to be borne, then to lyue in ſo great miſerie.

and haue respect onely to this life, we shall praise the dead, rather then the lyuing. *A man were better to be dead*, then to see so great misery and calamitie. He speaketh nothing of ỹ iudgemẽt to come, but of thinges done vnder the Sunne: where it is better not to be, then to see such afflictions of men. Which thing also the Gentiles perceaued: which affirmed, *that it was the best thing not to be borne, or being once borne, shortly to die.* Therefore this place is to be vnderstãded plainly by way of comparison.

Also I beheld all trauayle and perfectiõ of workes, that is in the enuie of a mã against his neighbour: This also is a vanitie and vexation of the mynde.

An other kynde of mans misery, enuie, hatred, cõtention, vsed in this lyfe.

HEre is another kynde of calamitie & impediment of mans deuises: Euen as among great men, and men of power raigne sclaundering and oppressing. &c. So among the commõs is there nothing but enuy, emulation and hatred. &c.

Looke vpon the comminaltie, and consider the artificers, there thou shalt finde how euill disposed they are, what naughtines,

tines, fraude, deceite, and backbiting is among them, and how they hate, and enuye one another to the death. *If a man be cunning in any thing he is hated, and hath enemies.* He that is a good workemã hath an hundred that hate hym: whereby it commeth to paſſe as the Poet ſaith, that the potter enuieth the potter, the Smith, the Smith, and the Poet the Poet. This is the caſe and courſe of all Artificers. Imagine there were one that woulde learne ſome craft or occupation, wherby to get his liuing in tyme to come. If he ſhould learne it ſo exactely that he ſhould paſſe other therein, then would other a great many enuy and hate hym. What then: Shoulde he leaue of? Shoulde he learne nothing? No. But labour ſtyll to his power, and commit his worke vnto God. What ſhall we doe at our ſtudye and bookes? Shall we geue ouer, becauſe our Schollers perceaue not this, or that thyng? or becauſe learned men are deſpiſed? No: goe forward with that thou haſt in hand. Waite ſtill for the houre. For thou knowest it is well done to teach other. Regarde not therfore the worlde, or thine owne deuiſes: Whereto ſoeuer thou

Men muſt not leaue their vocatiõ becauſe of the euill will, or vnthãkfulnes of others.

thou applieſt thy ſelfe, thou ſhalt finde troubles.

We muſt follow our vocatiō although mē enuye, or hate vs.

We thought in theſe dayes, to haue done many good by meanes of the Goſpell, and hoped that all men would haue embraced it, but euen they whom wée benefited, in deliuering them from the Popes tyranny, doe foulely bewray vs, and they at whoſe handes we loked for ayde and helpe, treade vs vnder theyr feete. What ſhall we now doe? Shal we take indignation thereat? Shal we ceaſe of from all our doing? No. Let them enuie, deſpiſe and perſecute: we will holde on as long as we are able, teaching, labouring, writing, learning, for ſo is gods will we ſhould. For without enuye, no man that meaneth well to doe, ſhal lyue in this world. We muſt not appoint the tyme when our trauell ſhall doe good. Let God alone therewith. Onely, ſée thou labour, and doe that God apporteth thée. And thinke not that thou art able to redreſſe all thynges, to ſée that all Officers be good, and all Artificers and craftes men at peace and vnitie. Thus therefore he ſayth:

I ſaw the induſtrie and perfection

that

that is in workemen.

THat is, I ſawe men well framed & diſpoſed to their duties and occupations, but they coulde bring nothing to paſſe according to their deſires, becauſe it was not in their power, the hatred of their neighbours was ſuch an hindrance to them. Therfore theſe be playnely admonitions and comfortes of the Goſpell, which call vs frō the cares of this world. For many are the heapes of mans vanitie and miſerie, and euery where at hand. When I firſt began to preach, I trauelled diligently to make all mē good, but it was ſayd to me, and that truely: *he is to yong as yet to teach olde knaues to become honeſt men.* warninges and comfortes Euangelicall.

The ſame falleth out in all other profeſſions. This euill beſtyreth it ſelfe in euery kinde of lyfe. The beſt is therfore to enioy the thinges we haue, and to goe forward with that we haue in hand, and to let euill paſſe by vs. And ſo ſhall we delude the worlde.

To be ſhort, he that will liue quietly, muſt thinke with himſelfe, that he ſhall ſee nothing in the world but vanitie, and thē ſhal it not greue him, if any euil hap- How a mā may lyue.

pen, & he shall reioyce in those gods that God hath geuē him. And if ý be driuen to such necessitie ý thou art cōpelled to prouide for thy selfe, doe that is lawfull for thee, and then let God doe what pleaseth him. But if thou wilt wittingly geue thy selfe vnto the worlde, to correcte all that is amisse, and to remedy all incōuiences, and wilt driue Satan out of the worlde: thou shalt procure thy selfe trauell and sorrow, and nought els, and shalt as little preuaile, as if thou wouldest goe about to stoppe the course of the riuer Albis from flowing. The affayres of thys world will not nor can not be gouerned at mās pleasure, but he ý made them all, the same ruleth thē also as he seeth good.

All things can not be redressed.

This also is a vanitie and vexation of spirite.

IF for example thou wouldest remedye this enuie, and such like euils. Let them enuie one another, lette and hynder one another, deale vniustly one with another: if God meane to vse thy helpe and counsell, he will doe it in his tyme and place: waite thou for that. Euen so now, if it please him to preserue studies and schooles, he knoweth the tyme and persons,

ſons by whom to doe it. They whome we thinke fitte for this purpoſe, be many tymes moſt vnhandſome and vnfitte.

The foole foldeth his handes, and eateth vp his owne fleſhe.

A Foole in this place ſignifieth not (as we commonly vnderſtand it) a dyſſarde or natural, but a wicked man and a naughty, whom in the Dutch toung we call, *a lewde vngodly perſon*: ſuch as are thoſe enuious bodyes, who beyng not able to doe any thing themſelues, doe yet diſturbe and hinder other. Such men being of no accompt themſelues, and without wit and induſtrie, doe no good whyle they liue, but be greeuous vnto others. Euen like thoſe ỳ teach or learne naughtely, fooliſhe and vnlearned preachers: ſo are there among artificers, ſuch drones, as we call pelters or counterfectours, which onely be impedimentes to other, and can doe no good them ſelues. Such there are among the magiſtrates, hynderers of the common weale, ſo that they moſt diſturbe the common weale, good ſtudies, and other vertuouſnes, who we hoped woulde moſt haue furthered the

whom Salomon calleth fooles.

ſame. So many fooliſhe preachers more hynder the Goſpell, then the profeſſed enemies of the ſame.

¶ The foole therefore foldeth hys handes.

HE is no earneſt labourer, no wakefull perſon, but a ſluggard and ſleper, which careth not for his labour, but hindreth contemneth, and backbiteth other. This is to fold the hands: to doe nought him ſelfe, but to hinder and let other. The like phraſe is in the vj. of the Prouerbes. Fold thy handes, and pouertie ſhall come on thee as one that trauelleth by the waye. Hereof it ſæmeth to come that Pliny ſaith: It bodeth ſome euill lucke to fold the handes together, which was very well ſayd of them but not vnderſtanded. Contrarywiſe of a diligent and good houſewife it is ſayd: Her handes layd hold on the ſpyndle, that is, She doth earneſtly meane it. Such fooliſh and naughty men doth God raiſe vp to hinder and let our deuiſes.

To folde the handes together, a ſigne of ſome euill lucke.

He eateth his owne fleſh.

AGaine this is an Hebrew phraſe, for he conſumeth himſelfe. The like is

in

in *Hiob*. I teare my flesh with my teeth. This he meaneth. Such foolishe men profite not them selues, but hurt & withstand other men. He enuyeth at other men, and fretteth him selfe alwaye: Such a man in a common weale is lyke vnto rust and wormes, hurtfull both to him selfe and to other. And therefore do they likewise continue as patches.

To eate ones owne flesh, is to vexe hym selfe.

¶ Better is one handful with quietnes, then two handes full with labour and vexation of mynde.

THis may be vnderstode to be spoken either of the foole by way of imitation, or els plainely and by way of affirmatiõ of Salomon. If by way of imitation thẽ must it be taken as a wise counsell of a foolish man, which abuseth a very good saying, after his doltish sorte, as such as he is vsed to doe. As if he should say: why should I take such paynes, as doth this mã, wearyeng and toyling him selfe with such labour and trauell: Why should I weare my selfe away: I shal receaue asmuch as an other, so excusing his slouthfulnes, as a certeine Monke sayd, affirming there was no reason why he

When must be content & meane estate.

ſhould conſume him ſelfe alwaye by ſtudying, conſidering he receaued as large a portion as the Doctour. Amongeſt ſuch felowes we haue to liue, although they be intollerable euen as when we are cõſtrayned to walke thorough woodes and thickettes, where we muſt ſtriue to get out, although the brambles and thornes ſtay and hinder vs neuer ſo much. For this worlde is nothyng but thornes. If thou wilt take them affirmatiuely as the wordes & counſel of Salomon, which ſence pleaſeth me beſt, then this is the meaning. Seyng in all affaires there be lettes & impedimentes, what ſhal a man doe? Freat not thy ſelfe, though ſuch fooles hinder thée. And if the foole will fret him ſelfe, yet hold thou on in thy labour, and enioye that thou haſt gotten mearily. If thou cãſt not haue both thine handes full, take in good part that God giueth thée, though it be but an handfull. And although thy gaine be but ſmall, yet content thy ſelfe, and liue chearefully therewith.

I turned my ſelfe, and ſaw an other vanitie vnder the Sunne. There is one alone, and not a ſecond, which hath

hath neither sonne nor brother: yet is there no ende of his trauell, neyther can his eyes bee satisfied with riches, nether doth he thinke, for whom doe I trauell, & defraude my selfe of pleasure? This also is vanitie, and an euill trauell.

SAlomon goeth on, in reckonyng the cares that follow the vanities of men, among the which he accompteth this couetous Euclio, which gathereth & hourdeth vp heapes, and yet can enioy none. All the worlde for the most part is entãgled with this vice. All men seeke that is their owne, and prouide for the belly, yet chiefely he reprehendeth such as breake their braynes to enriche themselues, and onely gather for others, neither abydyng a tyme to get them, neither to enioy thẽ. The couetous are reproued.

There is one alone. &c.

THis vice the Poets also condemne, and worthely deride in their fables. For the couetous man enioyeth not hys golde, he onely looketh on it, and yet his eyes are not satisfied, euen as the Poets fayne of Tantalus. For thus wryteth Horace:

The thirstie Tantalus doth stande,
in Water vp to chinne:
And faine Woulde of the Riuer drinke,
that glydeth by full thynne.
Laugh not (I say) for chaunge the name,
and then the tale is tolde:
Of thee that heapst and sleepst vppon,
thy bagges of gathered golde.
Or as a man that feares to touch,
some holy thyng, art fayne,
To looke and gape vppon thy golde,
or els from it refraine.

It is better therefore there be two then one, for of their labour commeth some profite. For if one fall, his fellow will lift him vp. Wo vnto him that is alone. For when he falleth there is none to lift hym vp. And whē two sleepe together, they shall one warme an other. But how shal one becom whot. And though one may ouercome one, yet two may make resistaunce: a threefolde corde is not easely broken.

THis is the counsel of Salomon commendyng societie and fellowshyp of goodes, and commaundyng vs to vse thinges

things present, and not to labour for our selues onely, but for others behoofe also. Fellowshyp is profitable for the preseruatiō of goodes. The couetous body will haue no partener or fellow and condemneth the communitie of goods gathering to him selfe onely, beyng a very dogge at the hey stacke. These solitary persons, and scrapers, no men but beastes, Salomon in this place condemneth. It is better saith he to liue in societie and fellowship of goodes, for if one fall. &c.

A commendation of cōmunitie of goodes, for goodnes will communicate it selfe.

This place they racked to sinne and confession, thus vnderstanding and expounding this text. If any mā had fallen in sinne, and had had no holy mā to haue made his confession to, he had not bene able to haue risen into the way of grace and godlines. Howbeit we haue declared that Salomon speaketh of the course of mans life vnder the sunne, agaynst mās vayne vering of him selfe. For he commendeth the societie and fellowshyp of mā in enioyeng their goodes, agaynst the solitary life of the couetous. This is that he sayth. The couetous mā profiteth neither him selfe, nor other. No man seeleth any commoditie by him, as he that li-

The depravyng of this place.

ueth

ueth not with any man, but kéepeth his goodes onely to him selfe, yea in hauyng them, hath them not. But who so leadeth not his life in such solitary wise, of him commeth some commoditie, beyng profitable to him selfe, and receauing cõmoditie of others. For this societie maketh to the preseruyng and encreasing of goodes. This is it, that he afterward addeth: hee hath none to helpe him. Agayne: how shall one become warme? He hath no helpe, no counsell, no comfort in affliction. What hath he when he alone gathereth for him selfe: he is onely a beholder of his money, as it were of some painted table.

¶ A threefolde corde is not easely broken.

Cõmunion of benefites is a band of humane cõsolation.

HE entermedleth a feate Prouerbe, as he doth oftentimes hereafter, and that according to the manner of a good preacher. The meaning is, It is better to haue fellowes, and to enioye thinges in commune, then to be a couetous body, solitary, rapyng and reuyng onely for him selfe. In fellowship there is mutual helpe, ayde and comforte, where the co-

uetous

uetous mans life is miserable, bayne & full of affliction, beyng at length compelled to dye like a miser. This thing he cõfirmeth by a Prouerbe, borowed as it may seeme hereof. A certeine wise father ready to depart this worlde, called hys sonnes vnto hym, deliuering them a bundle of roddes to breake, which when they could not breake, beyng bounde fast together, yet being taken in sunder, they brake. Therby teaching his sonnes, that their force and power should be inuincible as long as they liued in vnitie together, and would one helpe an other. For thorough concorde small thinges would grow & encrease, where through discorde they would lose and fall in sunder.

Better is a poore and wise childe, thé an old and foolish kyng, which will no more be admonished.

HEre is an other kynde of lyfe after these couetous persons and vnprofitable to others. Euen as he sayd there was vanitie in couetousnes, so now he saith there is the same in ambition. For many are borne to be kinges, and yet remaine not so. Many come out of the pri-

He reprehendeth ambition.

son

son and become kinges and richmen. Other forgoe their kingdomes and become seruaunts, because we should know, that our deuises are nothing. Our counsell, our endeuour doth nothyng. Therefore some of captiues become kinges, and gouerne well, because God prospereth thē, and some that be borne kynges gouerne naughtely. I haue sæne many children godlyly brought vp, and very well instructed, whiche when their tutor hath bæne gone, and they come to their inheritaunce, haue prooued very vngracious and wicked graftes. And other without any education and instructiō haue made good men, what then? Shall we neglect our childrē? Shall we not instruct them? Shall we set all at six and seuen? No.

Labour is cōmaunded but care forbidden.

This booke seemeth vtterly to teach vs negligence & slacknes in thynges, but it doth nothyng lesse. It teacheth vs in dæde to set naught by our owne deuises, and cares, wherewith we trouble & vere our minde. So while the Gospell reiecteth the righteousnes of workes, it setteth not our hand at liberty, but our conscience, because God hath commaunded the worke, but forbiddē the care. So our chil-

children muſt be inſtructed, but touching their profite therein the care muſt be cõmitted to God. Euen as the huſbandmã muſt ſow his ſéede, but commit the care of his crop vnto God. Euen as God by his law that he gaue this people, omitted nothing that might belong to the gouerning of them, although it tooke not ſuch effect as it ought, and fell out euill w̃ a great many: ſo muſt the Magiſtrate haue a diligẽt care, that the cõmon weale may be well gouerned, and defended, but yet not truſt to his owne induſtrie and counſell. He muſt do his diligence and take paynes &c. But he muſt put away cares and veration of mynde. For we muſt not preſcribe God any meanes, place, or tyme. As the huſbandman throweth his ſéede into the grounde, afterwarde he goeth his way, and taketh hys reſt, nothing carefull for the encreaſe, for els he ſhould neuer haue any reſt. Therfore let no man thinke that Salomon cõdẽneth mẽs labour. He forbiddeth cares & anxieties, but labour he requireth.

For out of the priſon he commeth forth to reigne, where he that is borne a kyng loſeth the ſame.

This

The affayres of man passe wōderfully and are not ruled by our deuises.

This saying agreeth with the premisses in this wyse: therfore is a wyse childe better then an olde fole, because many tymes it cōmeth to passe, that some commeth out of the prison to a kingdome, & some other of kings fal to be ignominius and folish, as Manasse, Zedechias. But contrariwyse Ioseph being deliuered out of prison, became ỹ chief ruler in Ægipt. And in our dayes Matthias kyng of Hūgary being brought out of the prison was made a mighty kyng. Such thynges many tymes come to passe in the world, as the Romaine histories declare. Valerianus none of the worst Emperours, being taken prisoner, serued for a stole to the kyng of Persia to get on horsebacke by all the dayes of his life. How happened it so vnto him? Because his houre appointed of God was come. Wherfore then take we such cares: Sufficient to the day, is the care and trauel therof.

The education of a kyng.

Therefore a kynges sonne must be enfourmed, and brought vp like a kyng, but to prescribe him what he shall doe in tyme to come, and how good a kyng he shall be, is but an afflicting of the minde. This must be committed vnto the determination

mination and will of God, and we muſt ſay: Lord God I enſtruct and teach thys childe in dede, but make thou hym a kyng, at thy will and pleaſure.

I beheld all the lyuing which walke vnder the Sunne, with the ſeconde childe, which ſhall ſtand vp in hys place. There is none ende of all the people, and of all that were before them, & they that come after ſhall ſhall not reioyce in hym. This is alſo vanitie and vexation of ſpirit.

SAlomon calleth the lyuing, thoſe that lyue gorgiouſly, and as though they ſought for no other lyfe, but that ỹ world had bene created for their ſake onely, as the Gallaunts of the court vſe to doe. He cõtinueth in the example of a kings education, whether it be to gouerne at home, or in the fielde. Education (ſayth he) is a good thing, but mans will & ſtudie bringeth not to paſſe that he would. The deuiſes of education are deceitfull, the traueil is neceſſary, but the ſucceſſe and care oftentimes beguileth vs. Therfore he teacheth vs that our deuiſes are vayne. For if care and counſell deceaue vs in a kings

Our deuiſes deceaue vs.

educa-

education, how much more wyll it deceaue in education of the cõmons, where is lesse care, and slenderer education.

That he sayth the liuing, or all ỹ states vnder the Sunne, kæpe company wyth the second childe, he meaneth not all simply, but the most part of the kingdome: so that the sence is, all the company that be about the kyng, waite and attende vpon the kinges sonne his becke. Euery one cleaueth vnto him, hauing cõceaued some great hope of him. For this younge Prince is the second youth or springall, which standeth in stæde of another king, that is, which shall be kyng, and succæde in the kyngdome after his Father: *Before whome, and behinde whom is there a great company of people*, that is to say, he is waited on with a great multitude of people behinde & before, garding him, as though he were kyng. There is a great hope in this young man, that he should passe his father in power and authoritie. All mẽ dæmed and iudged very well of him, and yet they reioyced not in him. Why so? Because he aunswered not their expectation, because he prooued such a fole and dullard, accordyng to the prouerbe,

say-

saying: *eyther a king, or a foole borne.*

Thus Nero in great hope and ioye of the people was made kyng, in so much as the first fiue yeares of his raigne is of great fame and renowne. But the yeares after prowed most vnlyke. So Helioga- balus and Commodus also were chose Princes and Emperours, wyth great expectation of the people that they woulde be good men, but they deceaued all men of their hope and loking. For one of thē degenerated into a most filthy man, yea into a beast, rather then a man: the other fell out to be most incommodious, and ỹ third prowed Nero. Wherefore a good Prince is a most rare Phœnix. For mēs counsels are deceaueable, in so much that he of whom we conceaued many tymes some singular hope, him we most repent vs of. So Roboam, the sonne of a most wise father, of whom surely ỹ people cōceaued a very good hope, as one brought vp godlyly vnder his father: yet prowed he most vnlike to his father. If therfore mens counsels so faile in the hyest degree of lyfe, they will much more fayle in the life of priuate persons, in thy house, in thine office, &c. For euen there also thou

Nero.

Helioga- balus. Cōmodus.

Good prīces are rare & seldeom.

Roboam did degene- rate.

shalt haue thy childe eyther an artificer, and workeman, or a fole. &c.

In déede he speaketh of kynges, for in honorable personages are honorable exploytes and déedes, that is, such as are apparaunt. The déedes of priuate persõs commonly are eyther neglected, or lesse obserued and marked: but according to the Duch prouerbe, *A wise man committeth no small follie*. If a Commonner offende, or committe some foolishe facte, it is not much regarded. Otherwise, ỳ state and condition of priuate men and kings is all like.

Labour & endeuour are not condemned, but mens owne deuise and carefulnes.

Therfore Salomon condemneth not the paines taken in education of a kyng, in enriching of a childe, in gouerning of a familie and housholde, but our deuises, whereby we will rule and order all the matter. He commaũdeth the worke, but he forbiddeth thée the care. Trauell thou instantly, but committe the successe and effecte to God. Remember the example of the king diligently brought vp and enfourmed, & yet altered, that thou mayst know how thynges goe not by our deuises and endeuours, but by the will of God, which hath appointed a tyme and

season

season for euery thing, out of the which nothing can at any tyme succeede. Therfore if he aunswere to his education, thankes must be geuen vnto God, not to our studie and care, but vnto Gods blessing. If our corne grow well, we haue to thanke God for it, not our selues. For how is man able to defende his corne eyther from byrdes, or beastes, or wormes, or from the enuy of Satan. Therefore it lyeth not in our care and carke, but in the fauour and blessing of God, to the ends we should thanke him onely, which worketh all in all, according to his good will and pleasure. So falleth it out in the education of our children. If thou hast a good childe, say the Lord hath geuen him and brought it so to passe: If not, say, this is the prowfe and state of mans life, I did my diligẽce, the Lord would not haue it so: hys name be blessed.

The fifth Chapter.

Take heede to thy foote, whẽ thou entrest into the house of God, and draw nere to heare: for that is better then the Sacrifices of fooles,

for they know not how much hurt they doe.

The abuse of this booke.

HEre doe I beginne the fifth Chapiter, for it is a newe place. By reading this boke, it happeneth to the vnwise, as vnto the vngodly, through the preaching of the Gospell. For when these men heare the righteousnes of fayth and Christian libertie preached, and the righteousnes of workes denyed, by and by they reply: let vs then doe no workes, but let vs sinne on still, for faith is sufficient. Contrariwyse, if workes be preached as fruits of fayth, straightway they attribute iustification to them, & seeke saluation in them. So alway these two thinges follow the worde of God, presumption and desperation, so that it is an hard matter to holde the right way. The lyke falleth out by this boke. The vnwyse when they heare this doctrine, that we ought to be quyet in hart and mynde, and to committe all vnto God, inferre thus: If all thinges be in Gods hand and power, then will we not labour at all. Euen as the other offende on the other side, in being to care-

full

full, while they will moderate and rule all things after their owne measure & deuise. But we must all holde the straycht way to doe our diligence, and what we are able, according to the worde of God, but not to measure our doinges after our owne deuise, but to commit all the successe of our doinges to Gods wisdome.

It seemeth to me therefore, that Salomon in this place vseth a kynde of preuention, and wholesome exhortation to them that walke not in the right way, but either are to remisse & slacke of their labour', or els to carefull, counselling them to be ruled by the worde of God, and yet in ỹ meane season to take paines and doe their endeuour diligently.

Take heede to thy foote, whē thou entrest into the house of God.

THe temple or house of God was ordeined not so much for sacrificyng, as for preachyng, that the people of God might meete together, to heare the word of God. As a Prince calleth his house together, not onely to eate and drinke, but to heare his word &c. Therefore where the word of God is not heard there is no

why churches and assembties of people were instituted.

why he biddeth the to looke to their feete.

assembly of Gods people or house. He commaundeth them to take hede to their feete rather then their hart, to the ende, they should not be offended when they heare this doctrine, as Dauid saith in the Psalme: My feete were almost gone. For after the worde of God, whether it treate of peace of conscience, or outward peace, followeth offence. For it is that signe that shall be spoken against, for the fall and rising agayne of many. Euen as Christ saith: Blessed is hee whiche is not offended at me. To be short, the worde of God is offence and foolishnes to the flesh. Thus he saith therfore: Thou hearest when I teach thee, but take hede thou be not offended, or make my teachyng a stumblyng blocke to thee: that when thou hearest, a man should quyet his mynde, and that his deuises be in vayne, thou say not, then will not I labour at all, or thinke then thou hast nothing to doe. Or contrarywise, that thou be not ouer carefull, and wouldest gouerne and rule all thyng after thine owne reason. Mans cares, disputations, and counsels, are as vneffectual as Plato his policie or common weale. But if thou

Our doings & deuises must be ruled by the worde of God.

wilt

wilt auoyde all offences, geue thy ſelfe to the woꝛd of God, and to his woꝛkyng, and caſt thyne owne deuiſes and cogitations away. Open thine eares and bee perſuaded. Draw neare to harken. Foꝛ in no wayes neither of Gods noꝛ mans can we be in ſafetie, onles we giue ouer our ſelues wholly to the woꝛd and woꝛkyng of God, and ſtay vs therupon without any wauerynge of mynde.

For this is better then the ſacrifices of fooles.

THis is added by way of a Pꝛouerbe, to confirme this ſentence. It is better to harken to ẏ woꝛde of God, then all the ſacrifices and woꝛſhippings of fooles. This he ſaith, becauſe he would extoll hearing and obeyeng of the woꝛd, aboue all woꝛkes. Foꝛ it is meeteſt of all, that we ſhould harken to the counſell of our God, as often as we come into the houſe of God. The wicked tyꝛe and werye thẽ ſelues in their woꝛkes, foꝛſakyng the counſell of God. And here mayſt thou ſee what a fole ſignifieth with ẏ Hebꝛewes, not him that we call a dyſarde, but him that harkeneth not to the woꝛde of God,

To harken to ẏ woꝛde of God, is better then the ſacrifices of fooles.

who be fooles.

or beleueth it not with his hart, although otherwise he be neuer so prudēt, because such men know not God, neither the thinges belonging to God, much lesse care they for them, but are vexed and caryed about with cares, caring for that is not worthy to be cared for. Their care is how to doe sacrifice. But lay thou holde on the best part: harken to the worde of God, and beware thou be not offended at it.

For they know not how much hurt they doe.

Hypocrites know not how much hurte they doe.

By these wordes he expoundeth what fooles are. For surely there is no mā so euill, which would commit euill, if he knew it were euill in Gods sight. Therfore he calleth those fooles, ignorauntes, and blinde, which doe many thynges as though they were good, and with great earnestnes, but yet are ignorant that these sacrifices which they so busily make are vtterly impious. Thus Christ calleth the Phariseis blinde, which vsed to offer many sacrifices, and to weary themselues in workes, but neglected faith and charitie, yea knew them not, calling that

good

good that was euill, and ſo contrarily. Truly therfore doth Salomon call them fooles.

Here thou ſeeſt that the higheſt, and chiefeſt pointe in religion is called, euill. For he ſpeaketh of ſacrifice whiche they made with great good intent and earneſtnes, becauſe they did it, and regarded not the worde of God. Abyde therfore in the worde, leaſt thou neglect the ſame, and follow thine owne wayes, and fall into ỹ ſacrifices of fooles, as they did which vowed chaſtitie, pouertie, obedience, and ſuch lyke, neglecting the worde of God. All theſe in this doing were offended, and their feete ſlipped. The fooliſhenes of hypocrites.

Be not raſhe with thy mouth, nor let thyne hart be haſtye, to vtter a thing before God: for God is in heauen, and thou art on the earth. Therefore let thy wordes be fewe, for many cares breede dreames, and multitude of wordes declareth a foole.

This is one parte of them which are offẽded, and decline to ỹ right hand, which to much weary them ſelues and He warneth vs to auoyde offences.

reaſon

reason of goddes counselles. Euen as o-ther say, if we should doo nothing but on-ly beleue, then let vs doo no workes: so these men say, if our counselles be of no force, then what shall we doo? wherfore did God make vs on this wise? wherfore geueth he one man good successe, and an-other none? Salomon therefore counsel-leth vs in this place not to yelde to such cogitations, or to follow such disputers, but to abyde in the woorde, and to doo ỹ God prescribeth vs. Neither to regarde the ones ouermuch carefulnes, nor the others ouer greate negligẽce, but to hold on in the straight and high waye.

Before God.

THat is, in the house of God, in this place where God is woorshipped & preached, there be not to hasty to speak, that is, become not a teacher, but suffer thy selfe to be taught. The wicked after they haue heard the woorde, doo by & by barke and murmure at it, some on the left hand, other some on the right, both of thẽ being swift to speake before God, while they will place their doctrines in

ſtrede of Gods. Therfore follow not ẏ neither thine owne, nor their woordes, but harkē what ẏ Lord ſayth, as James teacheth thee: Be not many maiſters. The meaning is, be not a maſter of thy ſelfe, or of other, neyther harken to thy ſelfe, or to other, but onely to the woord of God. For one is your Maiſter and teacher which is Chriſt, who is in heauen, heare him.

The onely ſonne of God is to be followed as our teacher, & nothing muſt be taught contrary to Gods woorde.

Dreaming commeth through multitude of cares.

THeſe be two prouerbes which he applyeth to his ſaying: for it cometh to paſſe that where many cares and cogitations go before in the daye, that diuers dreames follow in the night, euen by the iudgement of the Phiſitions. This generall prouerbe, thus he applyeth: If thou reaſon & be carefully buſied in thy minde how to order thinges, and will take care for all matters, there will enſue nothing but dreames, which will delude thee when thou art waked, that is at length thou ſhalt conclude but vayne matters. 1. Timoth. Knowing not what they

Oſtentatiō of wiſdome & ouermuch chat reprehended.

ſay

say, nor whereof they affirme. So where we & others appoint many ways, yet none of thē is followed, much more when we preferre our cogitations and counselles before the word of God.

And multitude of wordes bewrayeth a foole.

That is to dispute of dyuers matters, to be to wise in our owne opinions, to teach and prescribe all men argueth a foole. Therby is a foole to be knowen when he will seeme to be wise. Ouerhasty wysedome and righteousnes commeth neuer to perfection as one sayd: I hate that boy that is wise to soone. This therfore is his counsell, that we should not be so ready to dispute and reason, as to harken and doo. And this text might haue bene cōcluded in two words: Heare, and holde thy peace. For he that can gene good eare, we say in our Dutch prouerbe he will be a wise man. And he that with many wordes & much disputing, wil seeme to redresse matters, is a foole, and setteth thinges the more backeward. These are therefore notable prouerbes, for manners, and which may

be

be spoken agaynst those, which through their owne deuises will get their lyuing or which through their workes will prescribe God a rule &c. Euen as Iudas calleth them dreamers, which will order & appoint the Church without the worde of God.

For God is in heauen, but thou art on the earth.

That is remember thy state or condition. The greate maiestie of God is in heauen, thou art but a worme on the earth. Thou must not talke of Goddes workes after thine owne iudgement, let God rather speake: dispute not of Gods Counselles, nor goe not about to bringe thine own matters to passe through thine owne counsels. It is God alone that can dispose, and bring all matters to passe, for he is in heauen. All this we thus expresse in the Germaine toung: fewe wordes, holde thy toung. Thou shalt appoint God no rule. These men therfore offend on the left hand, which will not heare the word of God, but they wil helpe matters to goe forward, and teach God what he hath to doe. These men he thus beateth downe:

God must be heard & obeyed.

downe: Heare, and holde your peace, and doe that which God commaundeth & appointeth you, which if you will not doe, you shall offende, and so become a dreamer and a foole.

When thou hast vowed a vowe vnto God, differre not to pay it, for he delighteth not in fooles. Paye therfore that thou hast vowed. It is better that thou voweſt not, thē to vow, and not perfourme.

The doctrine of vowing.

THis place is greatly tolled in the Church and kyngdome of the Pope, as the onely foundation whereon they buylde and set vp their Monkish vowes. We dispute not whether vowes are to be perfourmed or not, but whether the vowes which they vaunte of, be vowes, yea, or no. Hierome and Lyra agrée both in this, that a vow ought to be such as is possible for vs to perfourme, and concerneth the glory of God. This they call a foolishe vowe, to gather vp strawes from the grounde, and to claw the head wyth one finger. And Moses reciteth diuers kyndes of vowes, and what thyngs may be vowed, namely a fielde, an house,

What things may be vowed.

meate,

meate, cloth, our owne bodye, all which are in our power. Thus the Iewes vowed their lyfe and body to the Priestes, to serue them for a certain time appointed. Furthermore, Moses hath no perpetuall vowe, but one which he calleth Anathema, namely a vowe of death, in ỹ last of Leuit. that that must be slayne whether it were man or beast that was vowed, as did Iepthe in the eleuenth of Iudges.

The vowes of the olde testament.

Wherfore if Monkes will bragge of their perpetuall vowes, they must by ỹ by be killed, if they will defende theyr vowes by Moses authoritie. Otherwyse all vowes be possible, and for a tyme, so that thou mayst vow thy bodye to God, also thy fielde, thy medow, thy garment, for a certain tyme. &c. that the Leuite, or Priest may haue the vse of it. This kinde of vow was very profitable for ỹ Leuits, for their better maintenaunce & finding. And God appointed this for their prouision. Our vowes are vtterly foolishe, if (I say) not impious. For we vow pouertie and obedience, which are cõmaunded in the Gospell to all Christians. To vow virginitie is impossible, Ergo, by Hierome and Lyra his iudgement, they

The vowes of Monkes.

What our vowes and wishes be.

To vowe virginitie is a thyng impossible.

are

are no vowes. Howbeit this place of Salomon ſeemeth to me, to pertain to thoſe that are on the right hand, who hearyng that their owne wayes profit them not, will afterward doe nothing at all. For thus the fole diſputeth: if by mine owne care and deuiſe, I can not bryng that I will to paſſe, then will I not perfourme that I haue vowed. &c. Againſt theſe contemners he ſayth: Doe that that God commaundeth: I quit thée not from labouring, but I appoint thée to doe that ý God hath commaunded. He commaundeth thée to pay or perfourme that thou haſt vowed. Conclude all theſe ſayinges thus: Harken, holde thy peace, and doe that thou haſt to doe, that is, that God commaundeth thee.

For he is not delighted in fooles.

God is angry with ſcorners & cõtemners.

NOw confirmeth he his saying with a threatening from God, he ſpeaketh of ſuch foles (after the manner of Scripture) as contemne and regarde not the worde of God: Be not reachles, make not light of it, for you ſhall not eſcape vnpuniſhed, but abyde ſuch payne as is ordained for them whom God forſaketh,

and

and is angry with.

Suffer not thy mouth to make thy flesh to sinne, neyther say before the Angel, that this is ignoraunce, least god be angry with thy saying, and destroy the woorkes of thyne handes. Many wordes are but dreames, and vanities, but feare thou the Lord.

Contempte of God condemned.

THis is a confirmation of the same sentence, admonishing vs that we be not obstinate in refusing to doe ỹ we ought, as he taught vs before, not to be too carefull, & to doe all according to our phãsie, & deuise. Speake not (sayth he) so carnally, so rashely, so foolishely, to harken to thyne owne flesh, but speake accordyng to the worde of God. And say not this is ignoraunce, or a trifling fault, if I labour not, or perfourme not that I haue promised, as men of light consciences make light of sinne, and thinke that God regardeth not sinnes, or requireth not our good deedes. See thou excuse thee not, or neglecte if thou offende him. For hereof spring heresies, when they set the word of God at naught, and shamefully defende it,

standing so highly in their owne conceit, that they thinke they haue no neede of Gods worde.

what the Hebrew worde Sigajon signifieth.

This securitie or negligence, the Hebrew worde Sigaion declareth, which is vsed also in the title of the seuenth Psal. & in the title of ỳ song of Habacuc. For it signifieth ignorance, but not that that we call folishnes or lacke of knowledge, but rather that which more truely we may call lacke of conscience, or inconscience, if that were a Latine worde, that is, when one doth not know a thing, or maketh no conscience of it: so that ỳ mayst referre it not to the Angell, but vnto him that saith: I know no fault by my selfe, God will not reprooue me.

Before the Angell.

BEcause God gouerned this people by the meane of Angels as is sayde in the epistle to ỳ Galathyans. The law was ordayned by Angels, in the hand of a mediatour. And Moyses sayth: to the people. The Angell shall go before you, commending to them the Angell ỳ gouerned them: after this maner Salomon sayth: say not before the angell, &c.

&c. whom the Lord hath appoynted to be our gouernour Before the Angell is all one, as if he should say, before God: Least God be angry with the same. &c. that is: See thou contemne not thy vow & so become infortunate in all thy waies and doinges.

Afterward he cõcludeth all this place, after ỳ same sort, & with ỳ same sentẽce almost that went before: Dreames only & vanities &c. For where many cares are, there be many dreames, and where are many counsels, and disputations, there be many vanities. Therefore feare thou God, be content with his worde, & suffer him to rule at his pleasure. For he is in heauen, and thou on the earth, as afore is sayd. Labour thou, but let hym gouerne thy labour & geue successe. For what getteſt thou by all thy wordes, cõsulting and disputing but trouble? For where many wordes are there are many dreames &c. This is the vniuersall proposition simply conuerted. Where are many cogitations & disputations, there are many dreames, where are many dreames, there are many wordes & disputations.

Where many cares be, there are many dreames & vanities.

The sūme of this doctrine.

The summe therfore of all is to feare God, and in thyne harte to reuerence & worshyp him. So Paule commaundeth the wife to feare her husband, that is, so to reuerence him, that shee committe nothing that may offend him. Euen so shall we feare God, that is we shall reuerence him, and doe or commit nothing that shall offend him. This he meaneth: Neyther consent thou to them that are to carefull, nor to those ỹ are to careles. Be thou neyther impious Despiser, nor presumptuous Counseller & Searcher.

Here noin is ỹ ende of this place and admonitiō, not to be offended at ỹ course of this lyfe, Neyther (sayth he) dispute nor contemne, but reuerence God, and thinke that it is Gods doing. &c. For god thus doth all thinges, to confound our deuises, and our flesh, and to declare that he is God. &c. For the flesh is eyther to carefull, or to contemptuous. Thus Salomon in the myddle of his oration taketh care to put away offence, least any should be offended at his doctrine; and eyther neglect his busines, or presume to much of him selfe. Therefore he counselleth vs to performe our vowe, that is

to

to feare God, and keepe his commaundement.

The Scripture vnderstandeth by a vowe not onely Ceremoniales, but the whole seruing of God. as Dauid sayth: psalme 49. Pay thy vowes to the highest, Likewise that the Iewes cried out: All the thinges that God hath commaunded, we will doo. This was a very great vowe: Euē so thou ỳ hast promysed to perfourme his will, stand to this vowe, letting passe all other thinges, which God will not haue the to searche or care for. Now returneth he to the rehearsall of mens affayres.

what the Scripture vnderstandeth by vowing.

If in a countrey thou seest the oppression of the poore, and the defrauding of iudgment and iustice, be not astonied at the matter. For he that is higher then the highest regardeth, and there be higher then they, and the King is ouer all the earth, so se the ground tylled.

After this treatye of godlynes, he returneth agayne frymly to his Roll of vanities, where he repeteth one thinge oftentimes as is vsed in Sermones.

An admonition agaynst the offēce take when good men are oppressed.

This he sayth. I bad you feare God, or els you shuld do no good, yea you would say, there is no God, onlesse you were armed with the feare of God and knowledge of the truth. For when you see the powre oppressed and iudgment subuerted here you will murmure, what vnrighteousnes will you say is this: where is god become: why suffereth he these thinges: against these cogitations and offences, Salomon confirmeth vs, feare thou God sayth he, and thinke there is a iudge appoynted for it, he shall redresse it. If thou canst not amend the Iudge, thinke this is the course of this world and howe no man is able to cause all Iudges to be iust, this onely is in Gods power, the high Kinge.

None vnderstand these thinges, but those that haue beene in office. I haue seene and proued in the Monastery, how many vniust mē haue bēene put in office, which thing yet coulde not be remedyed.

The saying of Doctour Sulpitius.

So Doctour Sulpitius beyng very wylling and desirous to put good men in euery office, and yet could not, was wont to say: men must goe to the plough with such horsses as they haue: he that hath

no

no horsse, must goe to plough with Oxen according to the prouerbe. So it fareth in worldly affayres: Sometyme there is a good Prince, but he is not able to see that all Presidentes and Iudges be good and iust men, and yet he is compelled to haue officers. So wise men haue great care to make good lawes for the commons, that they should be obediēt, but yet they murmure and complaine of the force, and vnrighteousnes of the Iudges. &c.

Good politike men are rare.

When thou seest such thinges, thinke these be the vanities of this worlde, and flye not out of the worlde as the Monkes doe into ỹ wildernes. For they fare like the husbandman that hath fierce horsses, and will geue them vp, where rather he should vse all kinde of diligence to tame and breake thē. So there be some so froward & wayward housholders, so sharpe exactors of worke, that they doe nothing but disturbe the whole house with theyr vnreasonablenes. This is a notable saying of Frederike the third which was Emperour: He that can not dissemble, cā not be an Emperour. Adde this, he that knoweth not how to dissemble, knoweth not how to liue. If thou wylt

The offices taken of naughty gouerning the commō weale.

The saying of Frederike ỹ third Emperour.

liue in the worlde, learne to sée this,

The doctrine of this booke is, that in the commō miseries of this life, we should keep faith fast, & a good cōscience, and quyet hart in God.

Then let vs doe nothing. Not so: We must labour and be doing: but that thou canst not bring to passe, dissemble. Thus it behoueth a wise housholder, to dissemble, and make as he knew not of diuers thinges that offend him: For it is impossible that all thinges can be done well & rightly. This booke therefore teacheth peace and quietnes of mynde, in these worldly affayres, that when thou séest or hearest of euils thou shouldest not vexe thy selfe, but say, this is the course of the worlde. It goeth none otherwise here. Againe, when thou séest thinges goe wel, to say: Blessed be God, which so ordreth these thinges, that not onely he suffreth euill to be done, bnt intermedleth good with euill. Doe thou that thou art able, the rest commit vnto God, and according to the prouerbe: He that can not lyfte vp the heauy stone, must let it lie still, and let him take vp the stone that he is able. Therfore when thou séest euill in Princes, Officers abuse their authoritie, Judges geue wrong iudgemēt, the commons murmure, and wise men dispute, thinke God will redresse this geare.

Let

Let not this matter trouble thee.

He goeth about to quiet and pacifye our mynde: Maruell not sayth hee, though thou see such thinges but be conted. Thou art not able to remedy these thinges, for thou canst not helpe or better them: wherfore feare God, and commit the matter vnto him, so shalt thou be quyet. He that will not thus doe, shall finde nothing but trouble.

For he that is higher thē the highest regardeth.

That God is ye reuēger of all wickednes.

That is, doe not thou vexe thy selfe, if thou canst not redresse it, leaue it to an higher Iudge. That, that the inferior is not able to compasse, let him thynke it belongeth to the superior. If the Prince be euill, complayne of it to an higher power, euen to God. So if I shoulde vexe my selfe much about the schismes and sectes which disturbe the Church, and contaminate the Gospell, what should I preuaile? Therfore I commit the matter to God that is the Iudge, in whose hand are all thinges. Notwithstanding I am sory that the soules of men are so miserably seduced and deceaued, but I cā

doe

doe no more but according to myne office resiste them, and say leaue of, you haue erred long inough, repent. When thou hast thus counselled an other, then commit him to God, according to Pauls saying: Him that is an heretike, after one or two admonitions, shunne and auoyde. &c. Agayne: wicked men waxe worse and worse. For they shall not escape their Iudge. Euery one hath hys Iudge, if the Bailiffe doeth it not, the Sheriffe or Maior will doe it. And if he will not iudge them, the king shall, if the kyng regarde it not, the Emperour shal. If the Emperour will not, God wil not contemne or neglect it. This is it that he meaneth: The king is ruler ouer all the earth. Salomon had no higher office: thé a kynges: Let the kyng bring to passe that thou art not able.

To see the grounde tylled.

wherfore the Magistrate is ordeyned of God.

THis seemeth to be as an adiection, or addition to a kyngly estate. Wherby is signified to what office he is appointed and what charge is of the secular power. To this ende (sayth he) is he ordayned a Magistrate and officer, to see the earth be tylled,

tylled, to reuenge the iniuries & wrongs of inferiors. The kyng hath the sworde, to defend the innocent, and to punishe the malefactour, and God suffereth no wickednes on the earth which he punisheth not by the magistrate. If the inferior officer doth it not, yet the higher doth: It cōmeth at length to the power of ỹ sworde.

This is notable that he calleth ỹ kyng a tyller of the ground: which thing signifieth not onely the tyllage of the earth, but the whole maintenaunce of the common weale, which consisteth of lawes, iudgementes. &c. For it is a kynges duty aswel to defend, as to make prouision for victuals, and other necessaries. Tyllage prepareth fode, warre, or the sworde defendeth vs, kæpeth vnder the malefactor, that other may ply their tyllage, and doe that they ought. So it lyeth in the kyng, as well to make prouision for necessaries as to sée them conserued. For vnles he defend them, other can not follow theyr tyllage. Thus Salomon both armeth vs against offéces, and also teacheth vs that our deuises are but vayne. I (sayth he) am a kyng by Gods appointmēt, and albeit I am not able to redresse all thyngs, The dutie of kynges.

yet

yet I doe as much as I am able: the reſt I am cõpelled to beare and ſuffer, leaſt ỹ whole land ſhould be left waſte, cõmending all things in ỹ meane while to God the high Iudge, who hath all the power of the ſword in his hand. Thus let euery man in his calling doe what he is able, and commit the reſt to the higher power.

He that loueth ſiluer ſhall not be ſatiſfied with ſiluer, and he that loueth riches, ſhall be without the fruite therof: this alſo is a vanitie. When goods increaſe, they are increaſed that eate them: and what good cõmeth to the owners thereof, but the beholding of them with their eyes?

The vice of couetouſnes.

THis belongeth to that he ſayd in the firſt chapiter: The eare is not ſatiſfied with hearing, nor the eye with ſeing. Here he treateth of the vanitie and deſires of mans hart. One worlde was not inough for Alexander. So fareth it in all other affayres, honours, ryches. &c. For ſo goeth the miſerable life of man, that a couetous man is an example to all men. He hath money, and yet

is

is he not satisfied, yea he enioyeth it not being present, onely he thyrsteth after other that he hath not.

What a couetous man is.

What els therfore is a couetous man, but an hart stretched out to that it hath not, and turned from that it hath? Therfore this is a vanitie of the hart: were it not better to be content with things present, and to cast of the care of thinges to come? Souldiours are happier then couetous men, although they be the worste of all other men, & liue most hardly. For ris all men be couetous, except such in whom other lyke vices put couetousnes away. But the godly onely haue this benefite, that they are contēted with things preset, and can vse them also with mirth and thankes geeuing. A couetous man hath no greater mouth, belly, &c. then a godly poore man, nor digesteth no more then he, and yet is he contented with a litle, yea he is riche, where the couetous in the middle of his riches is a begger. These things men are taught both holesomly and godlyly, but the flesh is careles say we, or doe we, what we will.

The goods of the couetous consumed by others.

Where much goods are. &c.

That

This is a notable sentence: The coue-
tous man is neuer filled, but still ga-
thereth. To whom: A niggard requireth
a prodigall. For although he haue neuer
so much money, yet is it consumed either
in his life tyme, or when he is dead, nei-
ther hath he any thing of it but sorow &
trauell. Kyng Salomon hath his houses
full of siluer and golde, but who vseth
them: His Courtcours. He onely is but
fed & apparelled therwith. Who haue ỹ
vse of Princes goods, in princes Courts:
Souldiours, wryters, braggers, & other
gay knaues. Therefore to gather riches
together, is to gather together many wa-
sters and consumers. Why then vexest
thou thy selfe with such scraping all
thinges togither? Be content with that
thou hast. For if thou wilt needes gather
riches, they wil not come without ghests
that will deuour them, if not in thy lyfe
tyme, yet after thy death. Thou hast
naught els of all thy goods, but to fill thy
mouth & thy belly, and to cloth thy back.
If riches encrease, take thy part of them,
leaue the rest vnto others, and laye aside
thy carefull gathering and scraping. If
thou wilt not so doe, yet shall it be done.

what it is to gather riches.

For

For thou heareſt here: Where much goods are, there are many to eate and conſume them.

And what good commeth to the Owners thereof. &c.

THis is an egregious mocking of Couetouſnes. Horace ſayth: Thou lyeſt gaping & ſleping ouer thy bagges rounde about thee, and art compelled to ſpare thē as though they were ſome religious ſtuffe, and haſt none other ioye in them, but as in certen paynted Tables. The ſame ſayth alſo: Amonges all thy hourds and heapes of riches, a very begger. The ſame ſaying hath Salomon: A Couetous man hath none other commoditie, but to behold his floreins, as I behold a paynted table, any thing more he hath not. A couetous mā can not vſe his mony to that ende it was ordayned, namely to eate, drinke and clothe himſelfe, and to ſerue other mens turnes with the reſt. For to this ende groweth wyne, corne, golde, and ſiluer, ẏ we ſhould thus vſe it. But the fleſhe careth not, but foloweth her owne deſires. Wherefore this followeth

of

of it, that he leadeth a miſerable lyfe, without reſt or quyet.

The ſleepe of him that traueleth is ſweet, whether he eat litle or much but the ſacietie of the rich will not ſuffer him to ſleepe.

SAlomon proceedeth in condēning riches, that is to ſay, the carke and care of gathering and keeping of riches. For the more a couetous body gathereth riches, the more his mynde is deſyred and enflamed. Alwayes a couetous body is in neede, and in the myddle of his goodes wanteth, yea couetouſnes is ſuch a monſter ſayth Saluſt, that neither with plenty, nor dayntye it is diminiſhed. And as an other ſayth: The loue of money encreaſeth, euen as the money it ſelfe encreaſeth. Among theſe miſeries of a couetous man, he rehearſeth yet one other. Though a couetous man be neuer ſo full, yet he can not ſleepe. So that all maner of waies a couetous mans lyfe is miſerable, being at reſt neyther day nor night. For nature hath ordeyned that the body being temperately dyeted and refreſhed, ſleapeth ſweetely and quietly.

For

For Drunkards neyther sleepe nor wake, being nether deade nor alyue. And he ỹ laboureth moderately, sleepeth quietly, although he eate but a lytle, as was said: Man goeth furth to his labour vntill the Euening. The couetous continueth his labour, euen vntill midnight wearieng, and breaking his body. The body therefore of the couetous ouercharged with meate, and tyred with labour, and the mynde troubled with cares, will not let him to sleepe, or take rest. Therfore seing Salomon sayth to him that laboureth, he commaundeth to labour, & forbyddeth not to get goods. And where he sayth: Sleepe is sweete, he requireth moderate labour, such as exerciseth the body, but tyreth it not. Therfore he appointeth to labour, and forbyddeth to be couetous and carefull. For the blessing of the Lord maketh rich men, and not continuall toyle and labour, as is sayde in the 126. Psalme. It is but loste labour that you rise so early, &c. Againe Thus God geueth his beloued sleepe. Thus Abraham, Isaac, Iacob, Dauid, Salomon, were made rich through gods gyft and blessing. And they so vsed their

Moderate labour commaunded.

riches, that other were relieued also by them.

How we ought to vse our goods.

Wherefore riches are not to be cast away, Offices are not to be geuen ouer, as Epicures haue taught, the wife is not to be cast of, nor the familye to be forsaken, but we must take paine, and be content. We must be doing among others, and take in good part whatsoeuer God sendeth. In what state God hath placed thee, there remaine, onely see thou go not about, to rule al things after thine owne prescription. In that state, what hurte happeneth not to thee, take that for a vantage. For this lyfe is so variable, ꝑ we may euery day looke for some euil or myshap. As for prosperitie and good hap, commeth without our expectation. But when it commeth, we must geue God thankes for it, as for some singular benefit. If we chaunce of an honest wyfe: if we happen to haue obedient children, let vs thanke God of it. If the magistrate rule the cõmon weale well and orderly, if the fielde yeld his increase &c. we must take all for a vauntage. But if it happen otherwise, vexe not, frett not thy selfe. Thus Salomon will not take vs out of

the

the worlde, but set vs forward in it, least we should imagine him to be like to Cratis or Diogines, which were foolish despisers of the worlde, and of riches. For this is but an impious saying of ỹ Philosophers, λάθε βιώσας. Lyue lyke an hydden and vnknowen man. For when they sawe the world was ruled vniustly they thought it best to lyue solitaryly, & not to meddle with publyke affayres, least they should be compelled to see and suffer such vnrighteousnes. This saying of vsing and bearing with ỹ world was vnknowen and hidden from all the Philosophers. But seing we haue Salomon to teach vs, let vs doo what we are able, and that we are not able to doo, let vs let passe.

A doctrine how we ought to vse our goods, and to beare the common miseries of this life.

I haue seene an euill sicknes vnder the sunne, to wyt, ryches conserued to the owners for their euill. And these riches perish by euell trauell, and he begetteth a sonne, and in his hand is nothing.

THis also is a most vaine misery in ỹ life of man, not come in deede to all men, but yet such as is dayly seene, how

The goods of many are hurtful to ỹ owners.

ryches are reserued to the myschiefe of ỹ master and gatherer. Salomon complaineth that this is not onely a mysery in such men, but also ỹ we see such thinges come to passe in the worlde, though we be

Examples.

frœ from them. For how many haue ben priuely slayne in their owne howses, in our dayes, bycause of their riches. Had

George Duke of Bauarye.

not the Duke of Bauarie in our dayes a great masse of golde, a tower ful of golde? But this golde purchased warre vnto ỹ Duke, and calamitie to the whole land. And scarse any Princes haue left greate riches behinde them, but they haue bene the destruction of the whole Countrey, as Iulius Cæsar turned the Treasurye of Rome to the destruction of the Citye. Our Bishoppes gathered treasure together, but onely for a mischiefe, for none was the better for them, & that causeth the Burroes, and people of the Contrey to rise. Now also they hold on in gathering, and fleecing of the people, but they will not leaue, till such come as shall take from them that they gather, with their owne destruction.

Shall we not yet cast riches awaye? No rather we must prepare riches, specially

cially Princes, but to thende to vse them and relieue others, which because we do not, therefore God suffreth for a punishment those riches wherein they put their trust, to be the destruction of the owners. So Ezechiel prophecieth against the couetous and wicked Iewes. They reached not out their hand to the poore, therefore they shall be led into Captiuitye, and perishe with their riches. The same shall happen to other rich mē, couetous Byshops, and contempners of the gospel, because they will not lett the powre haue ẏ vse of their riches, ẏ Souldiers and Checquere shall come, & take that that Christ receiueth not.

We must get goods, but to our owne and others godly vses.

That that Christ will not take, the Checquere will.

They perish with great calamitie.

He suffereth greate misery. At home he is euery day in daūger of theeues, abroad of Robbers, he is takē and killed. This song marchant mē know ful well.

And his borne of hym shall haue no possession of him.

The reason is, because Sodome & Gomorra haue riches, but they reach not their hand to the powre: therefore ẏ Lord

ouerturneth them &c. The couetous gathereth, and an other destroyeth that he gathereth. The couetous thinketh: my sonne shall haue these riches, but lo God sendeth thæues & Robbers, which turne him out of all he hath, so that neyther he nor his sõne haue any thing left. Wherfore we must follow labour, but looke for the blessing of God, and relæue the poore and nædy: yea all our labour must be ỹ in the haruest, and at ỹ grape gathering, we must sing and labour, and in the middell of our labour and sweate be meary, and so affected, that we can be content to forgoe all with a good will, thinkinge thus: I will labour for me and my children, If God send vs any thing, we will vse it. If any thing be left, let my sonne haue it after me, If nothing, God will finde him & prouide for him, as he hath donne for me.

Apply thy labour and aske and looke for good successe of God.

Euen as he came naked out of his mothers belly, so shall he returne naked againe as he came, and shall beare away nothing of his labour. This is a vaine and miserable thing that in all pointes as they came

they

they shall goe againe: & what profite hath he, that he hath trauelled for the wynde?

How we should vse our goodes.

THis also is in Iob. the first chapiter: Naked I came out of my mothers wombe. &c. Againe in Paul 1. Tim. 6. We brought nothing (saith he) into the worlde, neither shall we carry any thing out of the worlde. The rychest man in the worlde, can glory in no more, but that he hath eaten and dronke̅ of his goods while he lyued. &c. Since therefore we carry nothing with vs, let vs bestow it on other, and vse our riches, as we vse running water and the ayre. Let hym thinke thus: As when I dye I shal leaue my riches, eue̅ so shall I doe while I am lyuing. Why then should I so carefully gather goods, since I shal haue but a morsell of them my selfe. The water I vse thus, I washe me therwith, so doe other. Loke what we doe not nede, the same doe we suffer to passe by vs. So vse I fire and the ayre. And so ought we to vse ryches, as Stewardes and bestowers of them onely.

What profite hath he that he hath trauelled for the wynde?

To labour agaynst the wynde.

TO labour against the winde is an Hebrew phrase, which Paul hath imitated. 1. Cor. 9. I so fight not, as one that beateth the ayre: And in ỳ 1. to ỳ Cor. the 14. You shall be as mẽ that speake in the wynde. It signifieth as much as to speake in vayne. So sayth Salomon: A couetous man laboureth in the wynde, that is, in vayne: It is all lost labour.

All the dayes of his lyfe he eateth in darkenes, with much griefe, sorrow and anger.

what lyght and darkenes signifieth in the Hebrewe toung.

AGayne, this is a phrase of the Hebrewes. He eateth in darknes, for he eateth in sadnes. It is taken from the gesture & countenaunce of men: for whẽ the hart is heauy, then the eyes are ouercast, as it were with a cloude. But when it is meary then is it lightened as it were with certeine beames, and a newe lyght. This phrase is very often in the Psalm, light for mirth, and darkenes for sadnes, as in the 27. Psalme: The Lord is my light, and my saluation. Againe: Lighten myne eyes. &c. darkenes

To eate therefore in drunkennes, is

to

to labour in ſadnes. A couetous Artificer findeth alwayes ſome matter to offende him and to chide at, becauſe he is full of cares and heauines. he can not eate hys bread in mirth, he is alway chyding, he alway findeth ſomewhat in his familye that greueth him. So before the Prince and Magiſtrate are brought no matters but euill, there the vnwiſe magiſtrate vexeth himſelfe with care, becauſe he ſeeth his care and ſtudy taketh no better ſucceſſe. But the wyſe ruler ſayth thus: I doe and geeue the beſt counſell that I can, I ſuffer that I can not redreſſe, and am compelled ſo to doe, leauing it vnto God, which onely knoweth how to correcte all thinges at his pleaſure, and to proſper our counſels. what it is, to eate in darckneſs.

So it greeueth vs to heare among ſo many preachers, ſo few faithfull & good, & which loue their charge with all their hartes. But what ſhall we doe? Shall we vexe and fret our ſelues away wyth ſorrow therefore? No not a whit. But let vs commit the matter vnto God. &c. We muſt therefore acquaint our eyes & eares to ſee & heare thoſe euils that we woulde not, and not thinke to heare and

ſee

To labour agaynst the wynde.

TO labour against the winde is an Hebrew phrase, which Paul hath imitated. 1.Cor.9. I so fight not, as one that beateth the ayre: And in ỹ 1. to ỹ Cor. the 14. You shall be as mẽ that speake in the wynde. It signifieth as much as to speake in vayne. So sayth Salomon: A couetous man laboureth in the wynde, that is, in vayne: It is all lost labour.

All the dayes of his lyfe he eateth in darkenes, with much griefe, sorrow and anger.

what lyght and darkenes signifieth in the Hebrewe toung.

AGayne, this is a phrase of the Hebrewes. He eateth in darknes, for he eateth in sadnes. It is taken from the gesture & countenaunce of men: for whẽ the hart is heauy, then the eyes are ouercast, as it were with a cloude. But when it is meary then is it lightened as it were with certeine beames, and a newe lyght. This phrase is very often in the Psalm, light for mirth, and darkenes for sadnes, as in the 27. Psalme: The Lord is my light, and my saluation. Againe: Lighten myne eyes. &c. darkenes

To eate therefore in drunkennes, is

to

to labour in sadnes. A couetous Artificer findeth alwayes some matter to offende him and to chide at, because he is full of cares and heauines. he can not eate hys bread in mirth, he is alway chyding, he alway findeth somewhat in his familye that greueth him. So before the Prince and Magistrate are brought no matters but euill, there the vnwise magistrate vexeth himselfe with care, because he seeth his care and study taketh no better succesle. But the wyse ruler sayth thus: I doe and geeue the best counsell that I can, I suffer that I can not redresse, and am compelled so to doe, leauing it vnto God, which onely knoweth how to correcte all thinges at his pleasure, and to prosper our counsels. what it is, to eate in darckncs.

So it greeueth vs to heare among so many preachers, so few faithfull & good, & which loue their charge with all their hartes. But what shall we doe? Shall we vexe and fret our selues away wyth sorrow therefore? No not a whit. But let vs commit the matter vnto God. &c. We must therefore acquaint our eyes & eares to see & heare thos euils that we woulde not, and not thinke to heare and

see

ſée the goodnes, which woulde lyke vs. The worlde will not ſuffer this geare. He that woulde haue nothing to offende hym, ſhall finde more thinges than any other to offende him. Therefore let vs ſo fence our ſelues againſt all theſe euils, that we may know this is the courſe of this lyfe. &c.

Therefore I ſee it is good for a man to eate and drinke, and to be mery in all his trauell that he taketh vnder the Sun, all the dayes of his life that God geueth him: for this is his portió. But this is the gift of God, when he hath geuen man ryches and ſubſtance, and power to eate & drinke his part therof, and to reioyce in his labour.

The concluſion of the whole booke oftē times repeated.

THis is the concluſion of all this booke or diſputation, declared alſo before in the ſecond and third chapiters. And here thou ſéeſt that Salomó doth not cõdemne riches, nor forbid vs to get riches, eyther meate or drinke, but calleth them ý gifts of God, to teach vs to caſt our cares away, to looke for all theſe things at gods hand by fayth, and when God will: patiently

tiently to take the losse of them, as Abraham gaue his sonne vnto God. Therfore riches must not be cast away: for God doth not geue vs them to that end, to cast them away, or to absteyne from them, but rather to vse and deale them to those that nede. This sentēce is the interpretation of the whole boke, that Salomon forbiddeth all vaine cares, that we should vse things present mearily, being nothing carefull for things to come, least we lose our present benefite and commodity.

For this is his portion. &c.

That is, the same is all that he hath of it. For he remembreth not the dayes of his lyfe. That is, his hart is not vered with cares and heauines', neyther of thinges past, ne yet to come: because God chereth his hart. &c. Thus hath he ioye in his labour, and in the middle of euils entreth into Paradise. But the vngodly and couetous, and as many as after thys example vse not these worldly goods, beginne here to be tormented, and throwen into hell. &c.

The

Annotations vpon The ſixt Chapiter.

This is alſo an euill vnder the Sun, and much vſed among men: A mā to whom God hath geeuen ryches and treaſures, and honour, & wanteth nothing for his ſoule of all that he deſireth, and yet God ſuffereth him not to eate thereof, but a ſtraunge man ſhall eate it vp. This is a vayne thing and a miſerable.

Of what rich and couetous mā Salomon here ſpeaketh.

AFter this doctrine and exhortation intermedled, he returneth to his rolle of the diuers deuiſes of mans lyfe, wherin vanitie and miſery raigneth. It ſeemeth lyke that he ſayd before of the rich man. But here he ſpeaketh of ſuch a rich mā as kéepeth much riches about hym, and a great family, liuing in reſt without loſſe of his goods, and yet in the middeſt of his honor and riches, is greeued, and can not enioye them, becauſe eyther he falleth ſicke, or is vexed with hatred & care how to kéepe and encreaſe his goods. So with that he hath he is moleſted, and periſheth. If he haue a ſonne, then cōmeth another care,

how

how he may leaue hym a rich man, whē he is of age. For as the prouerbe sayth: for a smal childe there is but a smal care, for a great childe, great care. They gather for their childrē, they desire to leaue them rich, to bring them to great honor. These are the wishes and desires of all mē, which yet are most vaine. For what is it for a mā in his life to haue al things, and yet to vse nothing, but alwayes to gape after more, and that he hath not, not regarding that he hath?

What maner of riche man he describeth in this place.

He describeth therfore such a rich man as wanteth nothing to liue welthely and mearely with, and yet doth not so. Loke vpō many of our noble men which might liue commodiously vpon their owne, hauing aboundaunce of goods vppon theyr landes, yet not contented therewith, get them to Princes Courtes, and loke still for more, lyuing most miserablye. The lyke we may sée in riche men and Marchaunts, who being able to lyue at home quietly, with great daunger of their life, and losse of their goods, make great vyages both by land and Sea. Is not this a vayne and miserable trade? Therefore it followeth:

If

If he beget an hundreth children, and yet liue many yeares, and haue great riches al the dayes of his life, & yet his ſoule is not ſatiſfied with goods, and his body not buryed: I ſay that an vntymely fruite is better then he. For he commeth into vanitie, and goeth into darkenes, and his name ſhall be couered with darkenes.

The miſerable ſtate of couetous men.

HE amplifieth ỹ miſery of a couetous rich man. Let no mã (ſaith he) thinke by ſparing, to enriche his heyres. For riches are the gift of God, and come not of our labour: for many labour carefully to get riches, & yet can not attayne to them. Againe many ware riche, and haue takẽ no great payne for them, that a man may know riches are ỹ gyft of God. Neyther is it in thy power to leaue this or ỹ heyre riche: It is ment that poore men ſhal not be rich. Doe what thou wilt, thou ſhalt not enriche him whom God will haue to be poore. Furthermore it may come to paſſe, that this couetous rich man may dye, when he hath loſt all hys goods before.

And

And may want buryall.

HE holdeth on in eraggerating of hys myſery, that is, he may be forſakē of all his frendes, or dye in an other countrye, and not at home.

I ſay that an vntymely fruite is better then ſuch an one.

THat is, it were better he were not at all, then to be ſuch a miſerable man, and in ſuch great ſtore of goods, a begger. This is true without godlynes. Compare the lyfe of a couetous rich man, and a wretch with him that is not yet borne, and thou ſhalt perceaue it. And Salomō ſpeaketh not as fooles vſe to ſpeake, as ſome ſay of this place, but ſetteth out the lyfe of fooles, in the outward body. There it is better not to be borne then to liue in ſuch ſort: that is to ſay, to haue ryches, glory, children, long lyfe, and yet not to enioye them.

This therfore is truely vnderſtanded of a miſerable riche man, who hath the thinges pertayning to felicitie, and yet hys wretched mynde will not ſuffer hym to vſe them. Surely a poore man that taketh his condition in good part, is better

A rich man couetous is a miſer.

then

then a rich: for the wayfaring man with neuer a penny in his purſſe, will ſing as he goeth by the way: but the rich man is afrayde of euery buſhe, and in great felicitie is a very begger. Therfore ỹ world is altogether ruled by opinions, but God ruleth in dædes. We are vexed with opinions, and loſe the things their ſelues, lyke to that dogge of Æſops that we ſpake of.

For he commeth into vanitie, and goeth into darkenes.

That is, naked, deſtitute of all thinges and nædy he came into the worlde, ſo he lyueth, and ſo he dyeth: becauſe he enioyeth not his goods, but onely is troubled with care and deſire of more. Thys is nought els, but to haue nothing, and to be bare and beggerly.

And his name ſhall be couered in darkenes.

That is, he doth nothyng worthy of name, or commendable in his houſe, but onely it is ſayde of him, he was neyther his owne frende, nor other mens. Such a miſerable man, as no man would deſire to follow.

Alſo

Also he hath not seene the Sunne nor can be quiet in any place.

THis is an hebreiwe phrase, to see the Sunne, to enioy & reioyce in things. For this corporall lyse esteemeth ỳ sunne as a certain holy and sacred power, very necessary for man, without the which all thinges appeare and be sad and lumpish as Christ also sayth: He that walketh in the darke wotteth not whether he goeth: But he that walketh in the daye, stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this worlde, &c. It is a most ioyfull sight therefore to haue the sonne to shyne, but the couetous man loketh not on the sonne, considereth not the sonne, that is, he thinketh not how good a thing the sonne is, nor any other creature to vse and enioy it well. For in him all consideration of the benefites and creatures of God is lost, by reason of vnrtous desires, he neuer seeth howe goodly a gift of god ỳ sun rising euery day is. He myndeth nothing, he regardeth nothing, he sigheth after nothing but money. So the ambitious man loketh after nothing but honours. The louer loketh

what this phrase meaneth to looke on ỳ Sunne.

not vpon his owne lyfe, but alwayes vpon an other mans. That is, they vse not Gods present goodes and creatures. Thus the vngodly beginne their hell in this lyfe, wherein they are depriued of y vse of all the creatures and giftes of god, so that they neuer see y sunne which yet dayly shyne before our eyes. &c. that is, they reioyce not in Gods giftes, but still seeke after their owne desires.

Yea though he lyued two thowsad yeares, yet hath he no good lyfe. Come not all to one place?

The misery of a couetous man.

SEe how he amplifieth this misery of the couetous man: that is, he shall get nothing, but the lenger he lyueth y more his myseryes and calamities are encreased. This is the lyfe of man, mere vanitie and mysery, eyther such as thou feelest thy selfe, or seest in others. For euen the godly although they liue not after y flesh, yet the flesh troubleth them, and they are compelled to feele the vanitie of the flesh.

Doo not all thinges goe. &c.

HE repeateth that he sayd before in the first chapter, The sonne ryseth and setteth

setteth, and draweth to his place where he riseth. The Ryuers returne to ý place from whence they flowed. One generation passeth away &c. All thinges returne whence they came. At length all thinges perish. Mans lyfe, kingdomes, and whatsoeuer els belongeth to man, returneth from whence it came, from ý earth to the earth; euen as the winde bloweth to and fro, and as the sonne returneth to ý place where he arose. This therefore is Salomons meaning, ý we must let go care and thought for thinges to come, and enioye the thinges present. Therefore he goeth on.

All thinges that haue beginning shall decay.

All the labour a man taketh is for him selfe, and yet his soule is neuer satisfied acording to her desire

In the Hebrew it is, all the labour of man is for his mouth, by a certen phrase peculiar to ý people. So Moses vseth this worde mouth, for a quantitie or measure. Genes. 47. speaking of Ioseph. And he fedde them, and all his fathers house, geuing thē all meate, where in the hebrew it is: he had a care for euery mouth of them, that is, he prouided all

A mouth wyth the Hebrewes signifieth a kynde of measure.

his fathers house of meate, as it had been litle children, which haue their meate geuen them and labour not. And in the 12. of Exod. You shall eate the Passeouer, according to the mouth of euery one, that is, according to the number of them that can eate a Lambe. So speaketh Salomon here. Euery mans labor is according to his mouth, that is according to the measure and taske of him, ꝑ is, euery mã hath his certein labor. God graunteth to euery man his labour, according to his power, and according to his vocation, which we expresse in the Dutch toũg thus. Euery one hath soch parte as is appointed for hym. God hath measured to euery mã his portion. A childe must labour after one sort, a mã after an other. A magistrate in one kind, a priuate man in another. He will haue thee lyke an infant, exercised in infants doinges, and a Prince in highe & weighty affayres. Hereof commeth this Prouerbe. Such person, such sloppe or breeche.

Euery mã must applie his vocatiõ.

Thus he calleth vs frõ straunge cares to our owne vocation, not forbidding vs to labour, but declaring we must labour,

willing

willing vs to goe chearefully forward w̄ our busines, according to our taske, and leaue other mens doings to themselues. He will haue vs to take pleasure, but in God, that we runne not at ryot with the vngodly, when we are in our pleasure, nor be greued when pleasure is wanting but to take all thing in good part. Reioice (sayth he) in thy mynde, & take paine in body, so yet that ỹ kepe w̄in thy cōpasse, not lyke an enuious man, which seeketh after ỹ which is other mens. The marchaūt prayseth the Souldier, ỹ Souldier recounteth his infelicitie & prayseth the marchaunt. Olde men commend youth, we turne our eyes from ỹ pleasures we haue of our owne, and with greate misery, looke on other mens. No man can cō- sider his owne goodes nor lyue content w̄ his estate, for if they coulde so do, they would not couet after other mens as they do. For if olde men considered the daungers that are in youth, they would not wishe for youth. Agayne, if younge men sawe the manifolde incommodities of age, they would beare their owne incōmodities the more willingly, & would not enuy old mē for their cōmodities. &c.

Be content with thine owne estate

Who lyketh an others estate, hateth his owne.

But thus we can not do, but loke alwayes vpon other mens commodities, & despise our owne. So the couetous rych man hath an eye & desire to that he hath not, and that he hath he neglecteth. For the soule is not filled, that is, abydeth not within his compasse. So man contēteth him with his condition. A beholder of an Interlude, thinketh he could play better then those that playe. When I heare another preach I thinke I could farre passe him. The seruaunt likewise thinketh, if I were a kinge, I would gouerne all thinges prudentlie. So that fellow that is in Terence sayth: I should haue ben made a kinge. And yet if hee had had a kingdome, none would haue shewed him selfe a more foole then hee. It is cōmonly sayde: a morraine to him that doth better then he can. But the mind forgetteth his owne worke and is most busie in another bodies, so doth he neither of bothe wel. For he that loketh not well to his owne charge, he will very ill loke to anothers. God hath geuen me occasion to be occupied vpon mine owne, and so I leaue myne owne occupation, and busye my selfe wt other mens. This

is truely as that he sayd before, The eye is not satisfied with seeing. &c. Euen so the soule or the harte, is not satisfied with coueting, but is alway inconstant and chaungeable.

For what hath the wyse man more then the foole, or what profyteth it the poore, that he knoweth how to walke before the Lyuing.

Of what wise men & fooles Salomō speaketh.

That is, coueteousnes, to haue more the is appointed vs, troubleth aswell the wise men, as the fooles, & wyse men herein doe nothing differ frō fooles. For both of them couet to much, and both of them couet that that other men haue. He vnderstandeth such men as be not wyse in deede, but those that be wyse after a worldely sorte. And by fooles, he meaneth wycked and vngodly men. The subtill craftie and teachelesse people.

Both of them (sayth he) haue their trauel and labour appointed, beyond the which they shall be able to do no good. The one will bring it as farre as the other. For one may thinke or say thus: if I were in office or auctoritie, I would doe many things, but if he were in deede

in office, he would dw as lyke, as he is in office alreadye.

Or what profiteth it the poore?

HE vnderstandeth by the lyuing, those he spake of before: not onely those ý haue lyfe, but those that enioy the lyfe: that is, those which liue welthely & well. He sayth therefore ý it is a folysh thing for priuate men, to prescribe other how to order & gouerne all things, dreaming that they could dw all things better then other, where in deede there is nothinge donne, but that that ought to be.

The sight of the eye is better then to walke after lustes. This is also a vanitie and vexation of Spirite.

A looking glasse.

ALl this is an Hebraicall kinde of speech to vs vtterly vnknowē. The Hebrue worde properly signifieth a lwking glasse, ý is a thing comming toward our eyes or syght. For thus we rcade in Exodus. 38. He made the Lauer of brasse, and the foote of it of brasse, of the looking glasses of the womē, that watched at the doore of the Tabernacle. This should thus be translated in

the

the hebrewe. He made a lauer &c. in the ſighte of thoſe that watched before the doore of the Tabernacle of wytneſſe. For this people had certen women votaries, which contynued in prayers and ſupplication, watching and ſeruyng God day & night, as we reade in the firſt of kynges, and ſecond of Luke, that Anna watched. Of this watching, the women were called the hoaſt of the Lord, watching before the dore of the tabernacle of witneſſe. Afterward in proceſſe of time, the religion decayed, and as Iudas ſaith, was turned into wātonnes. So of Rachel ỹ wyfe of Iacob it is ſayd, ſhee was comly to the glaſſe, that is, to ſight, or to loke vpon: ſhee was fayre or pleaſaunt in ſight. The meaning therefore is: It is better to enioye ỹ things in ſight, & before our eyes, thē to wāder after our luſtes and deſiers, that is, vſe the thynges thou haſt, and let not thy witte wander about coueting of that, lyke Æſops dogge, who catching at the ſhadow, loſt the meate in his mouth. That which God hath ſet as it were before thee, that vſe and be content, and follow not the deſire of thine hart, which can not be ſatiſfied,

women watching in ỹ temple of the lord.

we muſt enioy thinges preſēt, & not ſeeke after thinges away.

fied, as he sayd before. Understand therfore by the light of the eyes, not such as thine eyes make to thee, but such as is made to them of other thinges, a palsine sight: that is, vse that that God for the time present geueth thee. Thus of God it is sayd in the first of Gen. God sawe all that he had made. &c. that is, he reioyced in his workes, he stucke vnto them, he sawe them, they pleased him, they were very good.

Wherevnto doth vnstable mindes, desirous of other mens welfare.

So he that is godly, cleaueth to that is his owne, and that that God hath geuen him for that tyme present lyketh & pleaseth him. The vngodly doth not so, but is vexed with al he seeth, because he vseth it not as a glas, but wandereth stil in his mynde. Though he haue money, he is not delighted therewith, he enioyeth it not, but alwayes desireth more. He hath one wyfe, and desireth another: he hath one kingdome, and is not content therewith. Alexander loketh and desireth for another worlde. All thinges ought to be as a loking glasse vnto vs, to delight in them, to fixe our eyes on them, to enioye them and geue God thankes for them. Therefore he forbiddeth vs to let our

soule

soule wander about, (as it is in the Hebrewe) that is to occupie our myndes in the cogitations and opinions of worldly thinges, so that ỹ conclusiō of this whole place is: vse the thinges thou hast, and wander not about in diuerse cogitations. for this is a vanitie, namely to let thy mynde wander and walke about.

What is that that hath beene? The name thereof is now named, and it is knowen that it is man: and he cā not striue with him, that is stronger then he.

By the thinges gone before, this is sufficiently vnderstanded, for we spake of this phrase before: What is that that is. &c. In all these wordes are Hebrewe phrases, which thing we thus speake in the Germaine toung: As it hath beene, so is it now: and as it is now, so will it be hereafter. That is, there shall be alwayes most vaine men, desirers and wyshers for vanities, because they goe beyond the word of God, and their appointed state. For they harken not to ỹ counsels of God. God hath made a differēce of men, & appointed to all men their bouds, when

There shal be alwayes vnstable mē, couetous, & desirous of other mens goods.

Euery mās trade of life is appointed of God.

when they shall be borne, when they shal die, by what name they shall be called, & what office they shall beare: & when they are borne, he offreth them thinges to vse presētly & out of hand. But mē being not contented with the ordinaunce and counsell of God, chose them moste tymes other wayes, and couet other thinges but in vayne. For none but God alone bringeth that to passe, that he thinketh or deuyseth.

The meaning thereof is: What is that that is, &c. That is what is man now lyuing, or that shall be borne hereafter. Since that, that man is ordeyned to, is all ready appointed, & what name he shall haue. Understand here, that name, that he hath by his dedes, whereof he shall be called, as ỹ name of Cæsar is to be a Conquerour, the name of Catiline, a Murtherer of his owne Countrymen &c. These names I say are so appoynted, & so called with God before we were borne. Euen so it was appoynted ỹ one should be a shoomaker, one a parish priest, another a preacher &c. If therefore these names & offices were appointed and knowen before, why doth man

wander

wander about in his owne opinions why taketh he so many thinges in hande, and desyreth such excesse? Why meddleth he beyond his boundes and marke? For he doth nothing but trouble him selfe more and more.

For he can not striue with him that is stronger then he.

That is with the thing that is aboue his reach. For all thinges haue their foundation vpon Gods lawe and ordynaunce. The very heathens sawe that things were not gouerned by the counsell of the wyse, but attributed the doing to destany, or to fortune, and not to God. So Salomon in this place hath an eye to the course of this world. As thinges doe passe in the world. There he seeth, that mē can not compasse & bring to passe that they desyre & take in hand. The reason is, because the selfe same things withstād them. They will not be in subiection nor be ruled by our coūsels, As if one would striue to haue his owne deuyse to goe forward he preuayleth not, the thing withstandeth hym, God stoppeth him. In vayne therefore we wince agaynst the pricke

All thinges ordeyned & appointed of God.

prick, to as small purpose as if we would runne through a wall with our head. For that that is stronger then he, and aboue him withstãdeth his deuise, as Anthony would haue brast through his enemies, when he came into Italy, and made his two sonnes kinges, one of the East, the other of the West, but he was disapointed thereof. See how Cæsar was put by his cogitations and deuise. Neyther hath the Popes enterprises succeded: because their names were geuen them before and apointed, they went beyond their boundes. So they straue agaynst a stronger then they, and so gat nothing therby, but care, sorrow, and calamitie.

We content with thine estate.

Because therefore thou seest that all thinges are appointed by a lawe and ordinaunce, both thy name and office, and yet not contented therewith, striuest against it, thou rowest against ỹ streame, & shalt not preuaile, although thou counsell and doest many things neuer so wisely, but onely multipliest words: nothing more will come of it sauing that it may be talked of. Thus Plato wrott many thinges, so did Aristotle lykewise touching

ing the ordering & gouerning of common weales &c. but they are but mere words, and remayne words whereof nothyng followeth. Afterwarde when they sawe they could not preuaile, they were desirous to helpe ỳ matter with other lawes and deuises, and sayd, would to God we had taken this way first, beyng wyse to late.

Therefore the stories aswel of ỳ Gentiles as of the Iewes teach vs, that men beyond their appointed stente & boundes can do nothing, whether they be wise or folishe, but the stories of ỳ Iewes were donne in the worde of God, and teach vs that all thinges are donne by Gods ordinance, and therefore it is good for vs to sticke to them. Otherwise the storyes of the Gentiles are as great and wonderful as they, but donne beside ỳ word of God. The doctrine comming by histories.

For who knoweth what is good for mā liuing in the dayes of his vaine lyfe, which is but a shadow? Or who will tell a man, what shall happen after him vnder the Sonne?

That is, no mā knoweth what is good for him in this lyfe. They know not how

No man knoweth what is expedient for him in thys lyfe.

how to enioye their goodes, nor howe to settle and quiet their mynde. Mens deuises are variable. One seeketh for rule, another for riches, and yet they knowe not, whether they shal haue. They enioy neither the thinges they haue, nor those they wishe. Onelye they desyre that cõmoditie and felicitie, that they neyther haue nor see. This is a generall conclusion vpon al men. None knoweth what is meete and conuenient for him. So Cicero and Demosthenes, whē they had written much of a common weale, and would haue set ỹ same forward with their deuises, they most vnluckelie gouerned the same. The monkes also and Papistes would rule al the worlde, & so they seduce it, & drowne it in greuous daungers & deepe darknes.

Or who shall tell a man what shall happen. &c.

The successe of thinges is not in our power.

HE speaketh not of that that shal happen after this lyfe, but what is lyke shortly after to followe the vse of thinges present. There no man knoweth what is to come, whether Antony shall lyue or not, whether Brutus and Cassius shal haue the victorie or not, whē Iulius came

to

to be Emperour, he deuised how to establish and make sure the kingdome to him and his, but he perished in the myddest of his cogitations, why then so trouble we our selues with such thoughtes, seing thinges to come be at no tyme in our appointing and power? Let vs therefore be content with things present, and commit our selues to the handes of God, who alone hath knowen, and doth knowe to rule and gouerne both things passed, and thinges to come.

The Seuenth Chapter.

A good name is more worth then a precious oyntement, and the day of death is better then the daye of byrth.

THis place sæmeth harde because of ỹ ignorauance of the Hebrewe tounge, which hath her figures that cã not be vnderstãded but after the vse of the tounge: and it sæmeth no maner of way to agrée with the thinges that are gonne before. We thinketh that this is the summe and meaning of the place, that Salomon will

Consolations and exhortations. enterme-dled in the accompte of vanities.

comfort men that are impatient in these vaine deuises, as hetherto he hath done after he hath recited a sort of worldly vanities, to intermixe some consolation and exhortation to the feare of God, that our hart might reare it selfe vp vnto God to harken to his worde, and not to be to swift of our toung. &c. So here againe he intermedleth a certaine exhortation after his rehersed Roll, meaning afterward to returne to his Roll agayne.

An exhortation to patience.

Let this place therfore serue for a place of exhortation or consolatiõ for the impatient man, inserted and set in the mydle of the rehersall of vaine desyres and deuises. For in this life the hart of man findeth nothing but offences, and impatiencie specially those that are good men, because as he sayd before: He that ioyneth knoledge to him selfe, ioyneth to labour. He that heareth and seeth many thinges, hath occasion to take much indignation, and sorrow, Because he seeth and findeth that it vexeth his hart. Loke vpõ Timon who did degenerate into a beast, and became a manhater, and enemye of mankinde, after he perceaued he had nothing but enuye and persecution, for the greate

bene-

benefites he bestowed vpon his countrye men. The lyke might happen againe to an other, seeing of all his labour and trauell, he reapeth naught but vnkindenes. For his harte may be so broken, that he he will leaue of and trauell no more.

These thinges Salomon speaketh of good mē which desire ỹ all thinges should dow well. Such as are magistrates & gouernours ouer housholdes, not of fooles which regarde not wisedome, nor care not how the world goeth. For they that are gouernours of the cōmon weale and Rulers of families fynde great deceite & falshode in men. This thinge hath frayed many men from intermedling with publyke Offices, So that olde man in Terence counted it an happy thing to be without a wyfe. An other againe sayd: I haue maried a wife, what misery haue I founde therein, children come, cares encrease. &c. Mans mynde is offended with all these things, vnlesse it be armed aforehand with the worde of God. Therfore they that saw these things, sayd: He lyueth well that liueth close and hid. &c. But Christians must be exhorted to liue in ỹ middle of these troubles, to mar-

Many wes ryed with ỹ malice and ingratitude of men, leaue their vocation.

ry wiues, to rule their familie.&c. And if their purposes shall be interrupted through the naughtines of man, to take it patiently, and not to leaue of a good worke. Forsake not thy standing, but abide in it. Be not discouraged with sorrow or impatience, nor ouercommed of anger. This is therefore a ioyfull & very godly exhortation, but such as none geeueth eare to, but only ỹ true Christians.

A good name is not gotten, but with great labour, and bearing of many troubles.

He beginneth this consolation with a prouerbe, saying: Better is a good name.&c. after his accustomed maner: for Salomon is full of prouerbes. This is it he meaneth: I haue now rehearsed so many vanities in mãs lyfe, that a mã might despaire & wishe rather to die, thẽ to see & suffer so many miseries & calamities, or els to geue ouer all paines taking, and to doe nothing: but not so, geue not ouer, but holde on. Fare not as one that loketh for no name & fame: thinke that thou shalt purchase thy self a name, if thou continue in thy stãding, whether thou be publike or priuate person. Beholde what a sluggishe life they leade, which liue for themselues alone. Therfore be not ouercomẽ of these aduersities

but

but stand against them. For it is better thou prœue a man of great name, an example to other, or cõmoditie to thy selfe, then to be an idle & sluggishe drone, profitable to no body: for a good name happeneth not to idle persons & sluggards, but to stoute and couragious men: Such as be couragious & wrestle, thorow. &c. S. Hierome, because he would seeme to flie the worlde and company of people, fled frõ Rome and came to Bethlehem, because he would liue here a solitary má, and yet he was desirous of a name, but his hart was not firme & strong inough. For he was very impatient, and had nothing lesse then a manly courage.

S. Hierom reprehẽded.

A good name compared to an odorifer-ous oyntment.

He saith therefore that a good name is better then a precious oyntment. Name in this place againe signifieth fame. And this prouerbe must be vnderstoode after the vse of thinges in Jury. In this kyngdome onely groweth that precious oyntment called Balsamum, or balme. And oyntmentes among this people were esteemed for the preciouste thinges of the kingdome, as we may see in the bookes of the kynges. Wherfore this was a fit & apte prouerbe among the Iewes, but not

among other nations, with whom perhaps precious stones are in more price. This is therfore a metaphore. As a precious odour and smell delighteth ỹ nose, so doth a good name delight the spiritual smell and sauour. This metaphore S. Paule commendeth 2. Corinth. 2. saying: We be the sweete sauour of Christ &c. For Paule was a good teacher, and sincere preacher, and in his conuersation faultles.

The meaning of this place.

The meaning therfore of this place is: Be not ouercommed of anger. As I haue taught thee to stand in feare before God, so I teach thee to continue in good workes before men. For what though some be offended and enuy at thy labours: continue thou still on, and the good sauour and good name, thou shalt get therby, shall allure thee more to apply & follow thy labour.

Better is the day of death, then the day of byrth.

An exhortation to beare patiently the incōmodities of this life.

I Thinke this also is spoken prouerbially. It seemeth to taste of gentilitie, & the flesh, to preferre death before lyfe. But he speaketh not simply of lyfe and death, but of such thinges as are to be done,

done, and are done euen of ỹ wyſeſt mẽ. Shew me a man in office, or ruler of a houſe and familie, and let him ſay, if it were better to wiſhe death, then to liue in ſo many daungers and toyles: Salomõ therefore compareth this life to himſelfe, and not to the lyfe to come, & ſaith: If we ſhall conſider the lyfe of man, then it is true that the day of death is better then the day of byrth. For what greater euil can happen to a man, then that thoſe which are in office, and doe all they can with all their hart for the behoofe of the common weale, and ſuffer whatſoeuer thinges for the common weales ſake, yet at the length finde nothing but all kynde of ingratefulnes, contempt, loſſe, baniſhment. &c.

Thus the terte is not ſimply to be vnderſtãded as it ſoũdeth, that he ſpeaketh not of Gods workes, nor of the lyfe that is after this lyfe, but of worldly matters as we vſe and handle them, whereof we receaue nothing but occaſions of anger & impatiencie. For the day of our byrth bringeth vs into theſe miſeries, & death deliuereth vs frõ them. Wans byrth is a good thyng, and a creature of God: ney-

ther doth Salomon speake thereof, but of the vse of it. For as my natiuitie is the creature of God, and as I vse it, they are thinges different. We of our natiuitie haue nothing but cares: not through our natiuities default, but through our own, and by reason of the naughtines of the worlde, which abuseth the creatures of God. Euen so our lyfe, as it is the creature of God, belongeth not to this booke. For of it to say, death were better then it were a most impious thing, considering God hath made vs men, and would haue vs to liue. This therefore is but an exhortation, that we shoulde not dispayre: but be of good courage, to beare out these misfortunes, euen as he should say: Suffer, beare, yelde not to these aduersities, but rather resiste and withstand them.

It is better to goe into a house of mourning, then into a house of feasting. For there is the ende of all men.

Suffrings are instructinges.

THis is spoken by way of a sentence. For of these two prouerbes, he maketh his sentēces & exhortations. A fole would affirme the contrary. Busye not

thy

thy selfe with mourning, and meddle not with any heauynes of lyfe (as Hierome followed the single lyfe for a pleasaunt thinge) but Salomon sayth otherwise, to beare the crosse and to goe into the mourning house is better. For in this house we beholde what the ende is of all men, and of the world. All thinges are full of greefe and sorowe, as well in publycke gouernment as priuate regiment, but it is better to beare this crosse, then to flye it. For he that is occupyed in mourninge and mortification, acquainteth him selfe to dye, he desyreth to liue no lenger, but dyeth with a good will. He that is not acquainted herewith, but will alwayes be at feastes, without the crosse, his mynde is not cnured, and he dyeth with great sorowe and standeth in extreme daunger. But he that is occupied and cnured and exercised herewith, he can well alwaye with it. Such a one will be a man.

Trouble bringeth vnderstanding.

He sayth therefore: although the fole doth and desireth the contrary hereof, yet leaue not thou of thy holde, content thy selfe although thou hast more trouble then ioy. It is better to beare out misfortunes then to yelde to them. For in that thou

Aduersitie must be suffred wyth good courage, and petition and seeking of gods helpe.

suffrest thē, thou shalt get ỹ a good name for it shall be sayd: this is a stoute & valyaunt man, he hath stand fast in the middell of aduersities. This fellow is able to vanquish all the assaultes of the worlde and the dyuell. For in the mydle of these myschiefes, man learneth to contemne them as Duyde sayth: That that thou canst not beare, if thou vse thee to it, thou shalt beare, & away with it well inough. Euen as the woman that dranke poyson dyed not of it, because she vsed to drinke it. And as the prouerbe sayth: knowen mischiefes are best. We must not therefore so flye, and abhorre aduersities, considering we know that the ende of all mē is to haue enuye, slaunder, myseryes and death. Therefore if ỹ wilt wade through them all, thou must learne these things by continuall vse. Such griefes come vpon fooles vnlooked for, but to the Godly by reason of long vse they seeme light, as vnto whom this worlde is counted but as donge, and death seemeth pleasaunt. And in that they lyue, they lyue onely for gods sake, which will haue them so to lyue.

And the liuing shal lay it to his hart

THe lyuing is he that liueth in wealth and pleasure. The naturall lyfe, the Hebrewes cõmonly call the soule, and ỹ vsuall and pleasaunt lyfe, they call to liue. He truely expresseth what the experience of aduersitie doth, namely that he that lyueth in pleasure, layeth it to his hart, that is, ỹ he is compelled in mynde or harte, to learne by such aduersities. And he that wil not suffer aduersitie learneth nothing, and so remayneth still a fole.

what this phrase, to liue, meaneth among ỹ Hebrewes

Anger is better then laughter, for by a sad looke, the harte is made better.

THis is all one saying with that afore. But how agreeth this with that he sayd afore? We must not be angry, but reioyce in all our labor. And here he saith anger is better then laughter? I aunswere. He speaketh rather of sadnes then anger, not that foolish sadnes which men counterfet. But euen as he speaketh of the house of mourning, so he speaketh of anger, so that anger is a kinde of sadnes, or greefe, ỹ causeth a kinde of heauynes, as when it was tolde Dauid that all the kinges

why sadnes is preferred before laughter: for the mynde of man rooteth in prosperitie.

kinges children were slayne, he fell sadd. There is the same worde, that is in this place, which surely can not there signifie anger, but heauynes, so that it is all one with that we say in the Dutch tounge. He was abashed and much troubled. Aduersities dusken the countenance, and make it heuye. So he that is in office publicke, or pryuate, Such a one can leaue his laughing, so that he be a good man and will do his duetye truely, there shall he finde such greefe, that he shall be compelled to saye. The deuyll be a burrow master or gouernour, for there is nothing but more sorow & trouble in it.

Such sorowes cause sadnes in the countenaunce of those men as wish all thinges well, in so much that they thus reason and thinke: cease of, geue ouer, thou nothing preuailest, but getteste thy selfe griefe and enuie. Here Salomon withstandeth these thinges, counselleth, and warneth thee, saying: yelde not, but goe thorough with it. For it is better thou take indignatiõ & be sad, that thou must bite away the same laughing, that thou shewe heauines in thy countenaunce and behauiour, and that thou be

compel-

compelled to shewe it (namely by reasō of griefe) then to laugh. The reason is:

Because thorough a sadde countenaunce, the hart is made better.

THis may be vnderstāded two wayes: first, through a sad countenaunce, the hart, to say, of others is amended. So Paule in a Byshop requireth grauitie in manners and cōuersation, that he offend not men by reason of lightnes. &c. So Salomon would haue him that is in auctoritie, to reioyce in hart, but to shew himselfe graue outwardly, that other might thereby be amended. For if a mā behaue himself in such wise, ỹ his hart be meary, and his countenaunce graue, so that he shew no lightnes in his apparell and gesture, him will other feare and reuerēce, and his familie will be of no dissolute demeanour.

with grauitie men are amended, wyth lenitie they are offēded.

Secondly it may thus be expounded. In an heauy countenaunce the hart goeth well, that is, there is no cause, but ỹ hart may be meary, although the countenaunce outwardly be heauy, so that the meaning may be thus: It is better to leade a graue and seuere lyfe, thē a lyght

A mā may be meary at hart, & yet graue in countenaunce.

and

and dissolute. The Hebrewes call laughing such a kynde of lyfe as our Papistes lead, which liue most dissolutely, contemning and deriding all thinges. And thys meaning pleaseth me better, then that whereby it is thought that the hart of a fole or godles body can be corrected by any mãs sadnes or grauitie. It may sæme that a wicked body feareth the grauitie of an other, but his hart is all one still.

A meane must bee kept betweene myrth and sadnes.

I take this saying therfore to be vnderstanded of thine owne hart, that in the middle of troubles it may be good. It is an Hebrew phrase, a good hart, for a pleasaunt and meary hart. And Salomon speaketh after this sort to dyrect his hearer to the marke of his meaning, that is, to teach them to be meary, howsoeuer ỹ world goeth. But where before he sayd: It is good to reioyce. &c. here he sæmeth to affirme a contrary: Sadnes is better then laughter. Surely these two sæme not to agrée: but godly matters are alwayes difficulte, they are alwayes wrested to a contrary sence. If we teach that nothing iustifieth but onely faith, then ỹ wicked neglecte all good workes. Againe: if we teach, that faith must be declared

by

by woꝛkes, then they attribute iustificatiõ to woꝛkes. A fole alway swerueth to much on one side. So hard a thyng it is to kæpe the highe way. So here Salomon requireth neither sadnes alone, noꝛ mirth alone, but will haue a meane kept betwæne them bothe. The mynde must be meary, at libertie settled, bearing it selfe euen in woꝛldly matters, betyde whatsoeuer, aduersitie oꝛ pꝛosperitie.

In the sadnes of the countenaunce. &c.

AS if he should say: I distinguishe betwæne sadnes of countenaunce, and sadnes of hart. I will haue all mẽ meary in hart inwardly: foꝛ it can not be, but outwardly some sadnes will happen. As the Apostle saith 2. Coꝛ. 6. As sad, and alwayes meary. &c. so that the one must be referred to the outward sadnes, the other to inward.

The hart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the hart of fooles is in the house of myrth.

ALl these things seeme cõtrary to that he hath sayd befoꝛe, except we make

a

a difference betweene these two, ỹ inward myrth and the outward, and inward sadnes and outward. He contynueth on in cõforting & exhorting, saying: follow not those fooles, which chaunge their mindes with euery chaunge of thinges, & in hart cleaue to them, they be meary in prosperitie, but when aduersitie commeth, they mourne and are sad.

In the house of mourning.

Fooles geue themselues to myrth, but wyse men study how to auoyde aduersitie.

THe Hebrewes call a house, not that building onely which is made of tymber and stone, but what place so euer any thing is donne in. So with their Grammarias, euery letter is a house of wordes that beginneth with the same letter. But why is the hart of the wise in the house of mourning? Because wise men are not ouercomed of aduersitie, neither chaunge with euery alteratiõ. Fooles follow outward myrth, and flye aduersytie, a most troublesome kinde of men, taking many things in hande with great rashenes and feruencie, and when neuer so lytle trouble appeareth, geue ouer. Where things succede with them, they goe through the stiche with it, where not, their hart is in

their

their hole, and away they runne? Wherfore they are neyther good to beare office publicke, nor yet to haue any priuate regiment, forasmuch as in no kind of life, men can lyue without incommodity and griefes. But the valyant mynde & harte of the wise beareth out all bruntes, and passeth through ỳ pikes of all aduersitie. It is to be noted where he sayth: the hart of the wise, and the hart of the fole. For he iudgeth according to affections, & not the thinges their selues. The hart of the fole loketh alway to myrth & pleasure, the harte of the wise to aduersitye and myshap: notwithstanding the wyse man many tymes hath prosperitie, and the fole aduersitye. Therefore these are confirmations and exhortations of good men.

It is better to heare the rebuke of
wise men then the song of fooles.
For the laughing of fooles is lyke
the cracking of thorns vnder a pot.
This also is vanitye.

HE calleth the opinions of fooles, a song, by a trimme figure. Neyther must it be transferred or vnderstanded of Musicke, no more then that which goeth before of outward banquetting, but of the

The rebukes of ỳ wyse must be patiently borne.

whole conuersation of mans lyfe, after the maner of the Hebrewes, & according to their figure. And rebukes are doctrines and exhortations tolwching thinges to be donne. This therfore he sayth: Although thou seeme to prevaile nothing, yet must thou goe forward with that thou hast in hand, & not cease frō rebuking, although fooles will geue no eare: to the which thinge Paule. 2. Timoth. 4. thus vttered: Reproue, rebuke, be instant in season, & out of season, I haue taught and doe teach that this worlde is vayne, and that thinges can not be ordered after our counsels and deuyse. &c. When a foole heareth these rebukes, he draweth them an other way. Let vs then doe nothing sayth he. But we must not cease for all this, neyther from doung, nor from rebuking of vanities, neyther from teaching and preaching, howsoeuer we seeme to be contented, but must burst through all impedimets and rebuke the vngodly. If I should haue left of preaching of the worde, because I see small fruite of the worde but amonge a very fewe, & great peruersenes and ingratitude of all the worlde, I should long sythens haue left

my

my peace. But God doth wysely which letteth vs not see or perceaue such things before we are in the middle of our course, when we can not come back agayne. And much better it is to be enuyed with these euils, then to leaue of. Therefore it is more profitable to heare the rebukes of the wyse, which wishe vs well, then the singing of fooles: that is those thinges which the flesshe heareth willingly, and which are pleasant to fooles. For onelye they desyre of vs, to speake to them all thinges that may please them. To be breefe, Salomon treateth with vs to this ende, that we should not ware ere the slacker, or cease from doing, through occasion of this foresayde doctrine.

For lyke as the cracking of thornes vnder a pot, so is the laughing of a foole.

what laughing meaneth.

Laughing signifieth the whole lyfe of a foole, wherein he delighteth, but it is but an outwarde visare of myrth, no true Ioye of ỹ harte. But there is a meruellous lykenes betwene the laughing of fooles, & cracking of thornes. The Iewes abound in similitudes, which they take

from thinges among thē. For they were still occupied in baking and keeping of fier by reason of their continuall washinges and Sacrifices &c. For their priests were very butchers and Cookes. Hereof sprang that prouerbe of the cracking of thornes in the fyre, both here and in the Psalmes. This seemeth to vs an harde thing, because it agreeth not with our vsage, euen as our prouerbes seeme harde to them, as when we saye. Copper money, copper soule masse, although it be in vse with vs, and taken from our religion, yet woulde not they at all vnderstand it.

Therfore all this place almost, is as a certeine allegory taken from the fier of thornes, which is a fier by and by, and ful of crackling, but is soone done. There is more flame and blase in it then fier. It threateneth a great fier, but as soone as ỹ blase and sounde is done, the fier is out. So in the Psalme: They are extinct as the fier among the thornes. And Virgil in the third booke of his Georgikes: As sometime a great fier in the stubble without any force, maketh great adoe. &c. Therfore the fier of hyers or thornes,

thornes, geueth no heat, it pearceth not, and yet it hath a greater shew then a fier of coales, which hath not much blase in it, but very great heate. So the myrth of fooles hath a shewe as though it woulde endure continually, and to haue as much force in it, as it hath flame: but there is nothing lesse, because they ioy but for a season: for whē aduersities come, they are dashed, and all thinges lye in dispayre. Thus I thinke the sentēce is cleare, and very wel agreeing with that which goeth before, and that which followeth.

This also is a vanitie.

BEcause after the ende of myrth, griefe and trouble remaineth in the mynde. After this sort is all carnall myrth, it endeth in trouble, and leaueth behinde it aking stinges.

For a sclaunderer troubleth a wyse man, and destroyeth a liberall or bountifull hart.

THis also serueth for a place of consolation. This is spoken by way of concession or graunt: that is, it may come to passe that a sclaunderer may trouble a wise

A comfort þ we ought not to be wearied & the sclaunders & vngratefulnes of men.

wise man, and destroy the hart of ỹ gifte (for so it is in the Hebrew) that is, the bountifull and liberall hart. For where a wyse man goeth about by his counsell to prouide the best he can for the worlde, and doth all thinges very well: yet fooles speake ỹ worste they cā of him, & he hath nothing but vnkindenes for his paines. The histories both of the Gentiles and of the Iewes declare the same, yea dayly experience. Thus Antiochus filthily put to death a man that had done very much for him, hauing first slaine his two childrē before his face. This verely was the reward that he had for his good desertes. Iustinian the Emperour most vniustly slew Belliſarius a very good mā and a wyse. All writinges are full of like histories.

Wherfore he that will couet to beare rule eyther in the common weale, or in ỹ house, must looke to lose his benefite, as well as God that loseth his benefite of ỹ sonne, & all other his giftes vpō vnkynde and wicked persons. Math. 5. So slaunder destroyeth a liberall hart, in so much that impatiencie causeth him to thynke to leaue of his doing, and maketh hym

through ingratitude to become a fole, vnles his hart be instructed in the worde of God. Thus wise men sometyme doe, as Hieronie saith: Patience oftetimes offended, rageth. And man cā doe none other, but God can. God hath geuen the sonne, kingdomes, and principalities to wicked men. &c. What doe they agayne? how requite they him? They crucifie hys sonne. Here is the thākes he hath. This can he suffer, but mē can not. For it happeneth to them as Salomon here sayth: Sclaunder troubleth the wyse man, & destroyeth a liberall hart. But be not thou ouercōmed of ill, but hold on: For:

The ende of a matter is better then the beginning.

That is, perseueraūce to the ende getteth the crowne. Waite for the ende and it consisteth not in the beginning but in continuance to the very ende. It is much better to attaine to the ende, then to geue the onset. For no man shall haue praise before his last day. Not he that beginneth, but he that holdeth on shall be safe. That I speake in matters of religion, the same is to be sayd of

We must continue to the ende, & beare out all aduersitie.

all other thinges, according to that commō saying: A hott beginning, a warme middle, and a colde ending: So doth it lie euen among the ashes. We Germaines specially are reprooued for thys fault, because we are desirous of newfanglednes. We take many thinges in hand, we goe forwarde, and continue in none, and specially this falleth out wyth vs in doctrine, where euery day we embrace straunge opinions. But this is the inconstancie of mans hart. Therfore we must not thinke so much of ỹ begynning as of the ende. Wherefore see that thou hold on: thy wisedome shall be sclaundered, thou shalt finde ingratitude, men shal forget thy benefites & good desertes, they shall backbyte thy counsels and deuises, & requite thee euill for good. Wherin, if thou be a shrumpe and white lyuered, thou shalt geue ouer. But goe thou on couragiously, holde out, for God at length shall geeue fruite and encrease to thy labour.

The Patient in spirite is better then the high minded.

HE continueth still in his exhortation. In mans affayrs it is alwaies requi-

red

red to conſider the ende. To this purpoſe the proude mynde is not beſt, which by & by is chaunged and will haue all thinges done at once, and vppon the head & ſpur, but the meeke ſpirited, which by patience and bearing can ouercome all impedimentes, that lye in his way, which thing we are taught by theſe ſayings of ỹ wiſe. Make not to much haſte. Suffer and endure. &c. Haſtines muſt be auoyded.

Be not haſtyly angry in thy mynde, for anger reſteth in the boſome of fooles.

THis is a copiouſnes of Salomon exhorting vs to holde one in ỹ we haue begonne, howſoeuer our deuiſes goe not forward. He ſpeaketh of the anger of the mynde as before he ſpake of outward anger. Be not caryed away hedlong with anger, although occaſions of anger happen, Let fooles be angrye Fooles haue anger both in hart and outwardly. But kéep thou thy minde meary, though outwardly thou ſéeme ſeuere. Anger muſt be bridled.

¶ Anger reſteth in the boſome of fooles.

THis is an hebreiwe phraſe, which we thus vtter in Dutch: Anger is proper vnto fooles, that is, they will caſely or ſone be angry.

¶ Saye not thou, why is it that the dayes of olde time were better then theſe? For thou dooſt not enquyre wyſely of this thinge.

The dayes are alwayes euill, and ye worlde ſet on naughtines.

THis thing the harte of man goeth about to ſearche when it ſæth the vnkindnes of the worlde, It is worſe then euer it was before. Say not thou ſo, for this is no wiſe queſtion or demaunde. Thus vſe olde men to say: When I was a boye, all thinges were better then they be now, as ſayth the Poet: A prayſer of the tyme paſſed. But Salomō ſaith it is falſe. It went not well to worke. For ye reaſon why thou dyddeſt not ſee it, nor perceaue it before now is, for that as our yeares increaſe, ſo experience of thinges, and occaſions of anger increaſe. For a chylde careth not, nor is not enuyed, though one man deceaue an other or kill an other &c. but holdeth on his playe, rideth vp and downe, hunteth and thinketh it a great fault, for one to ſteale an others

ball

ball or bowle away, then he is angrye. But when he commeth to kepe house, there he findeth greefe, untrustines of his seruauntes, their if his horse breake his legg, and his ore be not well fatted, he is angry in deede.

Therfore ỹ world was alway naught, but we were not alwayes in ỹ world, nor be not. When we were childzen, we felt no trouble, we were in a quieter kinde of lyfe, but the worlde was alwayes lyke it selfe. This in deede is true, that naughtines bursteth out in one age more then an other, but this commēth so to passe, because there are many tymes greater occasions and chaunces thereof then at other. But the naughtines of the worlde is alwayes one. Iulius Cæsar, made all the world to shake, because occasion and time serued him, which occasion, if Esau or Absolon had had, they would haue done the lyke. Therfore the same naughtines is alwayes in the worlde. Wherefore see thou settle and quiet thy minde that thou be not angry, when thou seest these euils. It is not in thee to alter the worlde, but take thou heede, that thou be not altered into an other man.

wysedome

Wyſedome is good with an inheritaunce, and excellent to them that ſee the ſonne. For wiſedome defendeth, and ſo doth money. But wiſedome is much better, for it geueth life to him that hath it in poſſeſſion

we muſt diſcharge the duties of our vocation, and commit the ſucceſſe vnto God.

SAlomon laboureth chiefly here, to improue that doltiſhnes that ſome alledge when they heare religion taught. If (ſay they) all our indeuour and ſtudyes be cõdemned, then let vs doe nothing, let vs ſit ſtill lyke ſluggardes. But Salomon replyeth ſaying: I condemne not riches, neyther allow I ſluggiſhnes, yea I allow both riches & wyſedome, but I preferre wyſedome before riches, becauſe ſhe geueth lyfe vnto man. Howbeit mens deuiſes in compaſſing of riches & other things I condemne. Neyther be thou (ſay I) to buſy, nor to idle, neyther be thou a fole, nor yet wiſe: Nether preuaileth, that is, bring not thine owne fetches & forecaſts, nor follow them not in getting of riches, or wyſedome, but haue a care to that, ỹ God would haue cared for, & caſt away thine owne deuiſes which are naught but vanitie. For the wyſedome of God is not

ſet

set before thée to ỹ end thou shouldst doe after thine owne wysedome, but loke vp into heauen, that God may worke these righteousnesses and wisedomes. &c. Thus therefore he both condemneth mans deuyses in compassing whatsoeuer thinges: and yet, he exhorteth them to be doing forthwyth in ruling and gouerning of thinges, and to wayte for Gods ayde and helping hand, where they perceaue they succæde not &c. For if thou wylt follow and set forward thine owne deuises, thou shalt receiue naught but vanity and trouble of mynde. &c.

Wisdome with inheritaunce is better then they that see the Sunne.

TO see the sunne, is to be meary & reioyce in this lyfe, or to liue pleasantly. This he meaneth: wisedome with inheritaunce passeth all the pleasaunt lyfe in the worlde. And he maketh a comparison: wisedome defendeth, and so doth money, as we say: Goods doe encourage, that is, they that haue riches, haue trust, they that haue wisdome haue trust (these be things graunted) but yet make I a difference betwene them. For herein wysdome

wysedome must be preferred before riches.

wisedome passeth riches or money, that wisedome bringeth lyfe to the owner. This is not money able to doe, it neither keepeth lyfe, nor deliuereth from death. This he saith, because he woulde not seeme vtterly to condemne riches, but onlye the abuse of them. Then he preferreth wisedome, because it saueth the owners life.

Beholde the workes of God. Who can make straight, that he hath made crooked?

Mens affayres can not alway be redressed by our deuyses.

HE concludeth all this place, which he tooke in hand for the comfortyng of impatient and angry mē, with a trimme sentence. Why saith he, art thou angry? why art thou so impatient with ingratefull mē? Beholde ẏ workes of God, how no man can make that straight, that he hath made crooked, let this comfort thee. For by this argument thou mayst know that God gouerneth all thinges, and that it is not required of thee ẏ all men should be good and kynde, nor is not in thy power to make them so. Therefore be contēt, and let it goe as it listeth. It is not in my power to straighten things crooked. I be-

nefite

nefite many, and I receiue reproche and vnkyndnes for my labour. This is no marualle, nor any newes. For vnles god geue man an vnderstanding and kynde hart, thou shalt lose all thy good turnes. Therfore this place hath in it singular good doctrine: that it is mans arbitremēt to make the hart of man straight, or to correcte any kinde of griefe. Thou mayst in deede teach & admonishe men. &c. But none but god cā amēde it. To know this is the onely remedy against such ingratitude and sclaunders. Wherefore, when thy rebuke and instruction helpeth not, take Paules rule: A man that is an heretike, after once or twise admonishing auoyde. Whē thou hast done thy part, God will doe his. For not to leaue of before ỹ haddest corrected such things, were to place thy selfe in Gods rome, which were openly to be mad. Therfore:

Vse well the tyme of prosperitie, and remember the day of misfortune. For God hath made this as well as that, so that man can finde nothing after hym.

THis is the other part of his sentence.

Thus

It fareth well wyth no man alwayes.

Thus shalt thou doe: If ỹ haue wealth, be meary, and vse it as thou hast it: Lay thy cares aside and thy deuises, moderate thine affections. Let God be thy wisedome, commit vnto hym bothe thinges past and thinges to come: And so reioyce p̄sētly, that thou also remember aduersitie. That is, so frame thy selfe, ỹ thou mayst also be sad. Enioy the things p̄sent, but so as thou put not thy confidēce in them, that they shall alway indure. Be not careles, alwayes loking on prosperity, but p̄pared also for aduersitie, bearing a stedfast mynde and an vpryght betweene both states. Thus he putteth away thē affection and affiaunce of fooles, which are drowned in ioyes p̄sent, as though they woulde alwayes continue. We must so ioy, that we be not drowned therein, but kēpe a parte of our hart for God, wherewith we may also suffer aduersitie. So shall it come to passe, that mischieues forsēne, shal lesse disquiet vs.

For as God made this, so made hee that also, after his manner and custome.

HE fetcheth all our cogitations to god, and

and pulleth them from the things of this worlde. God (saith he) made all these thinges, the good day aswell as the badde: he ioyneth the good lucke by the euill, and that after his vsage & custome, (where againe there is an hebrew phrase in this worde Dabar, as was before in ỳ third chapiter, and in the Psalme, according to the order of Melchisedech) that is, as it is writtē and sayd of hym, according to his manner, as he was wonte: this consider thou, then shalt thou easely ouercome all temptations. But we are eyther drowned altogether in prosperitie or aduersitie. But when the godly see the entercourse of good and euill, they saye, thys is Gods order or vsage, and are ouercommed of neyther.

we must take prosperitie and aduersitie bothe in good worth

That man can finde nothing after hym.

THat is, that he may be taught, that he can haue no more prosperitie then God will geue him, although he seeke it. Man seeketh further then God appointeth, but he findeth not. God hath geuen thee myth, and thou seekest more myth, but thou shalt not finde it. For no man is

All thinges are appointed of god.

able to add any thing vnto Gods woꝛkes When our Lorde hath made an ende, then canſt thou add nothinge to it. When the hart is meary, it can not be ſoꝛy, and contrarywiſe. God ſo appointeth all thinges, that thou maiſt learne to be content with that that he ſendeth, and to vſe it ſo moderately that our ioy may bée in the Loꝛde.

I haue ſeene all thinges in the daies of uanitie, there is a iuſt man that periſheth in his Iuſtice & a wicked man that contynueth long in his naughtines.

He returneth to hys roll of vanities.

NOw hauing ended his exhoꝛtatiõs and conſolations, he returneth to his Roll, loking roũd about him. When I had belwed and conſidered (ſayth he) all thinges, ameng other vanities, came this alſo to be rehearſed.

There is a iuſt man & he periſheth.

we muſt not be too preciſe in executing iuſtice.

HEre againe we muſt ſo marke Salomon, ý we thinke him not to ſpeake of Gods iuſtice, oꝛ of the iuſtice of fayth, but of ciuill iuſtice, ſo that by a iuſt man, muſt be vnderſtãded an exactoꝛ of iuſtice,

He

He that will make the people honest. Such as is a man in office, or master of a familie. I saw sayth he, a iust man that had notable lawes & ordinaunces, which when he beganne to vrge, and to exacte them all to the vttermost, he nothing preuayled, but all went backwarde. Much lyke a certaine fole which bowing and croking him selfe against the Sunne, founde faulte that his shadow was crooked, and yet would not lifte vp himselfe. Such be we lyke. We see a mote in our neighbours eye, but the beame in our owne eyes we consider not. To be short, Extreame lawe or right, is extreame iniury. Ye that will right all thinges perfectly eyther in ciuell affayres or domesticall, shall haue much labour and littell profit. On the contrary syde, an other will doe nothing, careth not for the executing of iustice, neyther doth any good. But a man must neither be wyse, nor a fole, neyther iust nor wicked. What thē must me do? This shall be a meane.

Be not iust ouermuch, neither make thy selfe ouerwise, least thou perish. Be not ouermuch wycked, neyther

be thou fooliſh, leaſt thou dye before thy tyme.

What it is to be too righteous.

THat is let goe all extremitie of ryght. Meaſure thy ſelfe by thine owne fote and ſinge Knowe thy ſelfe. Then ſhalte thou finde in thine owne boſome a long roll of vyces and ſhalt ſay: Behold I my ſelfe am yet vniuſt, & yet ſuffred of God and not driuen out from amonge men. Why then am I ſo haſty, to exact of other ſo rigorouſly that I my ſelfe perfourme not? This is to be to iuſt. The world wil not away with this. Obſerue therfore the lawes, teaching and preaching, and giue thankes to God, if at any tyme thy family, or hearers confeſſe thy lawes to be right & holy, although they perfourme them not, according to the preſcript. So art thou in dede a iuſt and a wiſe man. But thē art thou to wyſe & to iuſt, when in authoritie, or in thyne owne houſe, thou haſt good lawes, and wilt haue them ſo ſtraightly vrged and folowed that thou wilt not haue one Iote of them broken. For this is Extreame right, extreame rigour.

A wyſe Magiſtrate, and houſeholder muſt make a difference betweene ỹ good-

nes

nes of lawes, and the obedience of Subiectes. It is better we beare and suffer a little rebellion, then the whole common weale should perish, as commeth to passe where there are such seuere Cractours of lawes. Therefore lawes must be vsed and set forward, as thinges will beare, & not farther. Thus doe Phisicians also, they iudge not, nor heale not diseases, according to the prescript of their bookes onely, but many tymes are compelled to take an other way according to the quantitie of the bodyes they haue in cure. So mens myndes are so diuersly affectioned, that many tymes lawes must be moderated. To this purpose we haue nede of most wise men, whereof there are but fewe in the worlde. Therefore we should chose all Magistrates and howseholders lyke vnto Dauid, Abraham, Salomon, Iosua, and such like, if they could be had, which could vse lawes aright. So expedient it were to haue the common weale well gouerned.

we must vse moderation in gouernance rather then rigour.

¶ Be not thou too wicked. &c.

THis is the other parte of the conclusion. Se ý as thou art not to iust, so

be thou fooliſh, leaſt thou dye before thy tyme.

What it is to be too righteous.

THat is let goe all extremitie of ryght. Meaſure thy ſelfe by thine owne fote and ſinge Knowe thy ſelfe. Then ſhalte thou finde in thine owne boſome a long roll of vyces and ſhalt ſay: Behold I my ſelfe am yet vniuſt, & yet ſuffred of God and not driuen out from amonge men. Why then am I ſo haſty, to exact of other ſo rigorouſly that I my ſelfe perfourme not? This is to be to iuſt. The world wil not away with this. Obſerue therefore the lawes, teaching and preaching, and giue thankes to God, if at any tyme thy family, or hearers confeſſe thy lawes to be right & holy, although they perfourme them not, according to the preſcript. So art thou in dæde a iuſt and a wiſe man. But thē art thou to wyſe & to iuſt, when in authoritie, or in thyne owne houſe, thou haſt good lawes, and wilt haue them ſo ſtraightly vrged and folowed that thou wilt not haue one Iote of them broken. For this is Extreame right, extreame rigour.

A wyſe Magiſtrate, and houſeholder muſt make a difference betweene ỹ good-

nes

nes of lawes, and the obedience of Subiectes. It is better we beare and suffer a little rebellion, then the whole common weale should perish, as commeth to passe where there are such seuere Exactours of lawes. Therefore lawes must be vrged and set forward, as thinges will beare, & not farther. Thus doe Phisicians also, they iudge not, nor heale not dyseases, according to the prescript of their bookes onely, but many tymes are compelled to take an other way according to the quantitie of the bodyes they haue in cure. So mens myndes are so diuersly affectioned, that many tymes lawes must be moderated. To this purpose we haue nede of most wise men, whereof there are but fewe in the worlde. Therefore we should chose all Magistrates and howseholders lyke vnto Dauid, Abraham, Salomon, Iosua, and such like, if they could be had, which could vse lawes aright. So expedient it were to haue the common weale well gouerned.

we must vse moderation in gouernance rather then rigour.

¶ Be not thou too wicked. &c.

THis is the other parte of the conclusion. Se ý as thou art not to iust, so

Some things must be winked at in gouernaunce, and yet must not gouernance through negligence be corrupted.

thou also be not to wicked, that is that thou cõtemne and neglect not all gouernment geuen thee in charge, and that thou suffer not all things to runne to hauock. It is good to dissemble some thinges, but not to neglect all thinges. If thy wysedome procede not, thou must not therefore rage in Ire and desyre of reuenge. Againe, giue not thy selfe to Idlenes, as one that careth not which ende goe forwarde. Do not lyke the wicked seruaũt, that hid his tallent in the grounde, and would not put it to vsaunce. Se thou be iust, & other with thee, set forward Godlynes, and continewe so doing, howsoeuer thinges fall out. Why so? least thou perish, and dye not in thy tyme. For it is to be feared least thy Lorde come, and call thee to iudgement, as he did the rich mans sowle, in a night when he least thought of it.

This life is full of sinne & errours.

If this were an heauenly and Angelicall lyfe, nothing should be done vniustly but this sinful nature can doe naught els but sin, and play the fole. He that knoweth not this, knoweth not the worlde as yet. We must imagine that we be here as it were in a shipwracke, or in the mid-

dle

die of a great fier, where we muſt labour to take ſome brandes away, ſeing we can not ſtint, or put the fier cleane out.

Wherfore, if thou be an houſeholder, be content if thou canſt pull but one out of the common fier of naughty men: If thou be a teacher of children, labour to teach and bring vp well, though it be but one. &c. If thou be a preacher of the Goſpell, ſo preach, not as thou wouldeſt win all men vnto Chriſt (for all will not obey the goſpell) but if thou canſt bring and conuerte but two or three ſoules, as it were ſmokye brands endes vnto Chriſt, geue God thanks: for we muſt not therfore geue ouer, becauſe ſo fewe amende through preaching of the Goſpell. But as Chriſt did, ſo doe thou. He deliuered his elect, the other he let alone. So did ỹ Apoſtles: thou ſhalt be able to doe no better. Thou art a fole, if eyther thou preſume to doe all thing, or contrariwyſe, if thy doinges ſuccéde not, deſpayreſt of all thyng.

As thou mayſt, whē thou canſt not as thou wouldeſt.

It is good for thee to take holde of this, and not to let that goe out of thy hand: for he that feareth God, ſhall come forth with them all.

The speaketh of iustice to be vsed in gouernment.

ALyke sentẽce vseth Christ, Math 23. saying: These thinges it behoued you had done, and not haue omitted or left vndone the other. So here also he requireth bothe iustice, and not exacte iustice, so that thou shouldest be neyther to remisse, nor to precise. Sometimes dissemble the lawes & equitie, as though thou were wicked. Sometyme agayne, lay holde on the lawe, and shew thy selfe iust. But remember that Salomon speaketh not here of such iustice as is requyred of euery person, as was sayd before, but of ciuile and politike iustice, which is not before God, but in gouerning of others, and before the worlde. For in personall and particular iustice there cã not be to much.

He that feareth God shall come forth of them all.

A rule to be obserued of gouernours of common weales.

THat is, the feare of God shall iudge what is best in both to doe. If I feare the Lord, my hart sayth: oftentimes I haue lyued thus, and as yet I lyue filthely. Therefore I will vse compassion towarde those that offende. If I can kẽpe thẽ vnder by moderate discipline I will,

if

if not, I will let them goe, till they incurre the daunger of the ſwoꝛde. And if they eſcape all theſe, yet ſhall they not eſcape the iudgement of God. Thus he ý feareth God walketh vpꝛightly in theſe things, when he ſeeth he cã not pꝛeuaile, he calleth vpon God. Wherfoꝛe doe that is thy duetie, admoniſhe, exhoꝛte, ceaſe not. He that will not harken vnto thée, ſhal fall into puniſhment, although thou puniſhe him not. There ſhall be one that will puniſhe him. As it chaunced of late to the Bowers, who when they woulde not harkẽ to our rebuking of them, were puniſhed inough by others. ꝛc.

The ſeditious bowers An. 1525.

Wiſedome ſhall comfort the wyſe man more then tenne myghty men in the Citie.

THis is a commendation of the wyſedome he ſpake of befoꝛe, that is to ſay, of iuſtice and equitie. Thinges are not pꝛeſerued by foꝛce, but all things are done and pꝛocéede thꝛough wiſedome, in the kingdome, in lawes, in adminiſtrations, in occupations. So we are made men, to doe all thinges by reaſon, and to pꝛeuaile moꝛe therby then all beaſtes, by their

Force without coũſell falleth of his owne sway.

Wyſedome is the gouerner of cōmō weales, and not lawes and power.

their ſtrēgth. Therfore, though lawes be neuer ſo well made, common weales neuer ſo well ordered and appointed, yet if wiſdome lacke, all things goe backward. For when a wyſe man maketh lawes, it is impoſſible that he cā foreſee all caſes & circumſtaunces. Wherfore many things are left to the order of thoſe that execute lawes. So ỳ lawyers call ỳ Emperour a lyuely lawe, becauſe he is ſet in place to moderate lawes, as he that ſitteth at ỳ charrette to rule it, & diſpoſeth all things according to place, tyme, and perſons. &c. For a fole doth more hurt by his preciſenes in ſeeing lawes obſerued, then a wiſe man doth in diſſembling ſome lawes. All theſe thinges as yet are ſayd by way of exhortation: Be not angry (ſayth he) though thinges ſucceede not accordyng to thy deſier. Let it ſuffiſe thée to keepe lawes, ſo farforth as all thinges be not trod vnder foote. For this is the greateſt wiſedome, not to know what lawe and equitie is, but to know that wiſedome is not followed nor obeyed in this worlde. This lyfe will not abyde to haue all thynges done right. The ſumme therefore of this place is, not to put any truſt

in

in our strength, but to rule by wisedome, which oftentymes keepeth all things vpright in a kyngdome, where force and violence marreth all. Why so?

Because there is no mā on the earth that doth good and sinneth not.

MArke this alway, ẏ Salomon speaketh of things vnder the sunne, and of such thinges as may be donne. Neyther informeth he here mens consciences chieflie, but teacheth quietnes of mynde in difficulte matters of this world. Therfore he addeth expressely (on the earth) vnderstanding, worldly iustice, and such offēces as we make one against the other as if he should say: Why goest ẏ about to haue all thinges donne straightly according to lawe? It shall neuer be, that all thinges shall be aright. If thou wilt lyue in the common weale, thou muste winke at many thinges, thou must not knowe many thinges, to the ende thou mayst obserue some iustice.

The best gouerners are sometyme deceaued & faultye.

Looke vpon thy selfe, and thou shalt see how many tymes thy selfe doost vniustly, & so not without a cause offendest many. Therfore seeme not too iust, because thou

Against too seuere exactours of iustice.

sinnest

sinnest and offendest in many thinges. So Christ in the seuenth of Mathew sayth: Thou seest a mote in thy neighbours eye, and considerest not the beame in thine owne, although there he speaketh of heauenly iustice. If we would loke on our selues at home, thē surely we should fynde these defectes that iustly offende others. This thing surely ought to admonish vs, not to be so seuere Iudges towarde others, nor to iust exactours of others Iustice. For hereof it commeth, that such rigorous exactours, are manye tymes most vitious men. They haue no affection of mercy and compassion, they are greuous and intollerable both toward them selues and others.

Gouerners must beare and winke at many thynges.

Salomon therefore meaneth, that we should not be angrie though we see things donne that offende vs. For we our selues alwayes doe not that we ought. At many thinges we must winke and beare with them. For as it is the propertie of the righteousnes of sayth and spirituall Iustice to beare with the weake, and gently to enfourme them, so it belōgeth to ciuile iustice (wherof he speaketh in this place) to beare with others defaultes, so that there

there ought to be a mutuall bearing and ſuffring one with an other. Cicero in his booke of frendſhip, will haue nothing diſſembled in frendeſhip. And Eraſmus in his Moria, will haue all the faultes of our frendes corrected. There be alſo ſpeculations of moſt paſſionate men. Fooles will gouerne the worlde with bookes, not perceauing how no man is able to perfourme that is preſcribed. So ỹ Stoikes fayned moſt foliſhly a wyſe man without ſence, being themſelues greuous to all men. It remayneth therefore that we winke and beare one with an other. For there is no man but offendeth, and doth that, that greueth an other.

Take not heede vnto euery worde that is ſpoken, leaſt thou heare thy ſeruaũt curſe thee. For thine owne hart knoweth, that thou thy ſelfe alſo haſt often tymes ſpoken euill by other men.

EVen as I ſayd to thée touching the experience of thine owne ſight: ſo ſay I alſo touching the hearing of other men. In déede thy familye muſt be gouerned, and the wicked muſt be puniſhed. If thou

canſt

canst amend or redresse no farther let it alone. The wicked shall not goe vnpunished. For this is a true prouerbe or saying: thou doest not clerely runne from the hangman, for God is the hangeman himselfe.

Least thou perhappes here thy Seruaunt curse thee.

we must not harken after euery mās talke.

There are some so curiouse in themselues, that they will hunte out all mens sayings and signes in so much that they will harken at the windowes, and pœpe in at the creuesses of the walles to heare what euery body speaketh of them. To whom it iustly falleth out, to heare that of their owne familye that grœueth them. Therefore if thou wilte geue eare to euery bodyes taulke, loke to heare euen thine owne householde to speake euill of thæ. Yea perhappes when thou thinkest not of it. For as thou shalt trye and proue many thinges: so shalt thou heare many thinges that thou wouldest not, so that thou shalt not nede curiously to harken what euery body sayth. Neyther be thou therfore by and by angry, & take weapon in hand, but make light of them

them, considering that thy selfe also hast offended others in many thinges. If Iupiter shoulde throw forth his thunderboltes, as often as men deserue them, he would in short space be left weapōles, as Horace sayth.

Therefore these two thinges are necessary in the gouernaunce of the world, The lawe maker, and the Qualifier of the lawe. The lawe maker to order and goueme the comon weale by wholsome lawes: The Qualifier of the lawe to applye them rightly, and to vse them prudently, according to tyme, place, and persons, &c. And a Moderator of the lawe is more necessary in the comon weale, then a lawe maker, as we may see by ỹ example of our owne howses. A wyse housholder appointeth euery seruaunt his dutie, his tyme, and place to doe it in, moreouer he appoynteth meate, drynke, and clothing, for men seruaunts and mayde seruauntes. But it chaunceth that his seruaunt falleth sicke, Here the lawe must be broken, and tyme must be serued. He will not require his taske of the sicke body. He prepareth for him better meate & drynke, and more handsome lodging, then

Two thinges necessary in gouernement.

Moderatiō of lawes necessary in all gouernment.

then for the rest. &c. And he is discharged of his taske. For els his maister shoulde be a folyshe man, and an vngodly. So here the appointment of the lawe is dashed, because the person is chaunged. Therfore if we many tymes depare frō the lawe, and offende in our sayinges & doinges, let vs beare with the same in others.

All these thinges haue I proued by wysedome, for I thought I would be wise, but it wēt the farther from me. It is farre of. What may it be? And it is a profounde deepenes, Who can finde it?

He setteth his owne example before gouernours.

HE alleadgeth his owne experience declaring what heretofore hath happened vnto him, while he went about to search these things. I instruct thée (saith he) by myne owne example. I teach ỹ to leaue of this precise wisdome, & that wisdome & a wise man be not all one. I was cōpelled to learne these things by experience, when I would go about to be wise, and bring all the worlde to be ruled by my straight lawes. But nothing succeded lesse. Therefore these two as I sayde are

necessary

necessary for the lyfe of man, a lawe maker and a moderator of lawe, this one aswel as that other. Euen as it is not inough for a wagener to haue good horses, and to knowe what waye to goe, vnlesse he gouerne well his wagen in the way as he goeth. Therefore the lawe must haue adioyned to it moderation, which will say thus. Thou hast done well to ordeine such and such lawes, and they must be obserued, but thinges excepted, alwayes to be excepted.

¶ It is a profound deepenes. &c.

SO before he sayde. All thinges are harde. &c. They that make write lawes, they haue an eye to general thinges as they must haue. But they ỹ are Magistrats must come downe to particulars, & see whether it ought so to be. There they shall finde infinite cases and circumstances. And this is a bottomles depth. The summe therfore of the seuenth chapiter and this exhortation is: Mainteyne the lawe, as farre as thou art able, and moderate ỹ lawe as much as ỹ mayst, so ỹ thou loke not to haue all thinges to precisely obserued, neyther be thou discouraged with tediousnes, but onely feare and serue the

A summe of ỹ seuenth Chapiter.

Lorde, and he shall teach thée to doe all thinges well. For they which are without this feare, are eyther too iust, or too impatient.

I applied my minde also vnto knowledge, and to seeke and search out science, wysedome and vnderstanding, to know the foolishnes of the vngodly, and the errors of doting fooles.

THis is an Addition to his forsayd exhortation and doctrine, as though he should say: I haue wel marked what happeneth to such as will doo, and haue all thinges donne iustly, and in exacting of iustice, are too iust, how thinges succeade not with them, and how while they will be too wyse, they become fooles. I haue founde, that sometyme it is the poynt of great wysedome to dote. Agayne I haue considered all kindes of lyfe to know how the wicked went to worke, & how fooles succeeded wͤ their matters, whether were better to cast from me all care (as fooles vse) or to be too iust. For he speaketh agayne of thinges donne, or to be donne, by fooles and vngodly, as he spake before

To play ẏ foole sometime, is an high pointe of wisdome.

of

of thinges done politikely by iust men.

And I finde the woman more bytter then death, whose hart is as nettes and snares, and her handes as bandes. He that is good before God, shall be deliuered from her, but the sinner shall be taken by her.

Amonge the assayzes of soles I saiwe this also, that procéedeth of women. For since he wzot a Register of vanytie, this was not to be omytted, neyther it chaunceth vnto soles, that will not sett their handes to wozke, but dw nothing, that they fall into the handes of women, and are compelled to doe seruice to them. He speaketh of such a woman, which taketh vpon her to be wyse, & to beare rule aboue her husband not of ỹ anger of women, although this is true, that a womā is moze passionate then a man is.

In other kynde of vanitie, the rule and gouernance of wyues.

Neither is womankynde here condēned, which is the creature of God. For the kinde must be seperated frō ỹ faultes thereto belonging, as before he seperated the wozkes of God from the deuises of man. Man is the wozke of God, but beside this wozke of God, he will followe

his owne deuises, and will not be ruled wholy by God, who onely was his creator and maker. So must the kinde be seuered from the faultes therto incident.

A wife ordeyned to obey, and not to haue rule ouer her husbād.

A woman as shee is the creature of God, must reuerently be considered. For shee is created to the ende to be an helpe to her husband, to fede her children, and to bring them vp honestly and godly, to be in subiection to her husband. And men are commaūded to haue the rule and gouernement of their wyues and household. If now a woman leaueth her dutie, and challēge the maistry of her husband, now shee dischargeth not the worke shee was created for, but doth according to her owne naughtines. For God created not this kinde to beare rule ouer the husbād, but to be in subiection vnder him.

Amazones women beareng rule.

Against these thinges might be obiected the histories of the Amazones greatly extolled of the greeke writers, who are reported to haue beene great rulers and warriours, but I thinke it but a fable ỹ is tolde of them. And where the Æthiopians chose women to be kinges & Princes (as we reade of Candace Queene of Æthiopia in the Actes) they doe it after

Candace.

their

their peculyar maner. As many tymes folishe mē are made princes and rulers: It was neuer permitted by Gods ordinaunce, that the wife shoulde gouerne. Thus it may be, that a woman shall be appointed in stede of a kyng, but alwayes she ought to haue a Senate or counsell of noble men, by whose deuise all things must be ordered. And although a woman yet be chosen on this wise to sit in gouernement, yet this confirmeth not the gouernement of women ouer their husbandes: for the texte is cleare: Thou shalt be vnder the obeysaunce of thy husband, and he shall haue the rule of thee. A woman is created to her vse, namely with wisdome and discretion to bring vp her children. For euery one in the thing whereto they are ordeyned is best occupyed. A woman shal doe more in the griping of her childe with the least finger, then a man with both his handes. Therfore let euery one abyde in that busines and worke, whereunto God hath called and ordeyned them.

The conclusion of this place therefore is, amongst the diuers impedimentes of that rest and peace that a man ought to

Crowing & imperious dames, great impediments to their husbandes.

haue in his hart, is a woman, such as will not let her husband haue the rule as he is appointed. So Sampson a very noble man was seduced by Dalila, a vicious woman. For they will not be contented with their distaffe and wooll, but will prescribe and rule their husbandes in things pertayning to the common weale. Such women (saith Salomon) I greatly hate: For they are bitterer then death, in that they are great causes of our vanitie. For if the husbands beginne once to yelde vnto them, all thinges goe to wracke, as it happened to Sampson, and as Salomon also doted through his women. This therfore is that he sayth. Euen as I haue seene them that are too iust & too wicked: so haue I seene women pearching ouer their husbands, which is a great vanitie, not because of the sexe and kinde, but because of the grinnes and snares. Therfore wyse men according to Gods worde, shall auoyde the snares, but not the sexe and kynde.

Beholde (sayth the Preacher) thys haue I founde, seeking one by one to finde the count, & yet my soule seeketh, but I finde it not. I haue

founde

founde one man among a thousand, but a woman haue I not founde among them all.

That is, through myne experience and obseruation in thinges, I haue learned much, namely how all is vayne, let other learne the same also. For this is ỹ greatest wysdome that man can attayne to, to know that no wysdome can preuayle or doe farther then God geueth leaue, as Socrates sayd: I know that I am ignorant, if he rightly vnderstode the same. One by one, one after another, that is, I haue runne through all deuises: I finde in them all, that man cañ not liue wel after his owne wayes. And my soule yet seeketh, that is to say, I se myne owne vanitie and others, and yet I cease not my folly, nor can stay my selfe, but seeke still for that I know I can not finde. I haue founde one mã of a thousand, ỹ is, which seeth how hys owne wysdome is of no force, howsoeuer thynges fall out otherwise then they deuised: so rare & selde they are, that haue attayned to this denyed wysdome. So Demosthenes after he had vttered all his wysdome sayde, that wysdome prosi-

Vnhappie is the wisedome that is not gouerned of God.

ted not. Hereof the Philosophers sayde, that all thinges came to passe by chaunce and fortune. For they could not imagine that the wisedome of God was far greater and higher then all mens wayes and deuises.

But a woman haue I not founde among them all.

IF men be not able to performe this thing, yea almost none, much lesse shall women be able to doe it. Agayne he speaketh of womenkinde, as they be out of grace, in nature, and vnder the sunne. For nature prescribeth not Gods workes and myracles. There may (sayth he) be founde one among a thowsande which by experience hath attayned to say: my cõsels and deuises can not succæde or preuayle, & so by this meane be made meete to gouerne. But not one woman hath atteined hereto, because of gods ordinance. Therefore in these cases they are not to be harkened to.

Onely loe, this haue I founde, that God hath made mã righteous, but they haue sought many Inuentions

The Scholemē heretofore haue wrested this saying to the establishing of frē will, against grace, and against Salomons meaning, where as Salomon speaketh of thinges vnder the sunne, and of thinges corporall in all his booke. Neyther enfourmeth he mens consciences (as hath bene already declared) before God, sauing that sometymē he maketh mention of the feare of God, but he enfourmeth men in gouernement, to bridle and kepe vnder their harts. In errour of the Schoole doctours.

This therefore is his saying: God hath ordeyned man to trauell in ỹ world, he hath appoynted him certaine workes, and labours. But man will not abyde therein, but taketh in hande such things, as his desire leadeth him to. God made man righteous, straight for hym selfe, to see what was before him, that is to say his present state, that he should content him selfe therewith. But not forsakinge this ordinaunce of God, reasoneth & compasseth matters to come. This is it therfore that Salomon sayth: I haue founde this by my searche, that no mā liueth contented with his estate, that all men cast their eyes aside vpon others estates, as No man content wyth his present state.

Ouyde sayd.

The ranker Cropp is alwayes seene,
apon my neighbours grounde:
And greatest vdder in his Kydde,
is alwayes to be founde. And againe:

The slouthfull Oxe will saddle haue,
And prauncing horse the plough doth craue.

Such eyes had Peter, when he sayd: and what shall he here doe? Therefore his righteousnes is in outward matters, that euery man should haue an eye to ỹ that is right in doing, gouerning, & not looke aside.

But they haue sought many inuentions.

That is they are occupied in manye waies, and dyuerse cogitations, how to gouern things herafter, leauing things present which god hath set before them. So the woman will entremeddle in her husbandes charge, & the mā in ỹ wyues matters. Therfore this sentence is a conclusiō of the vanitie of man.

Who is wise, and who can declare these thinges?

That

That is to say, all thinges are so difficulte, that they can not be vttered. For we be so drowned in our owne deuises and counselles, that we vnderstand not how we be drowned in them, as though he shoulde say, I will not speake of the facte it selfe. For men vnderstande not what right is, so farre they are from perfourming it. And this is a declaration how vaine the hart of man is.

The wisedome of a man maketh his face to shine, but vnshamefastnes putteth it out of fauour.

I Iudge these sayinges to pertaine to them that goe before. This figure of speech, that Salomon vseth here, is partlye knowen to vs by other places of Scripture, which haue the lyke figure. In the seuenth of the Prouerbes, it is sayde of an harlot meetyng with a younge man: With a strong countenaūce shee flattred him: Againe, there met him a woman stronge in countenaunce. (or whoorishe in behauiour). So Daniell in the viij. chapiter, hath a king

An acclamation, concluding with the commendation of wisedome.

king fierce in countenaunce. This figure signifieth impudencye and boldenes of countenaunce such as where no feare & reuerence is, as we say in our prouerbe of a fole, that he setteth a good countenaunce on it, meaning that he blusheth not, but is without feare and shame.

This place may be vnderstanded two wayes, first actiuely, as wysdome maketh the face of the rightous to shine, that is, wysedome maketh him cheareful in loke or countenaunce: Contrarywise folishe Hypocrites goe sadly, as Christ sayth of the Pharisies in the sixth of Matthew: They disfigure their faces, they looke sowerly. The wise man goeth away with a cleere countenaunce, because he doth that in him lieth. The wicked alwaies haue an hateful & cloudy cloke. It is therfore a kinde of prouerbiall sētence, as if he should say. It is to be seene by the eyes, where a meary hart is. The wicked alwayes hath his forhed ryueled and wrinkled. For as their harte is, so is their face. Secondarily, it may be taken passiuely almost in the same sence, that is, one that is of a meary coūtenance is chereful to other, and delighteth other,

His

His company is pleasant and delectable: And in this sense it is a conclusion in commendation of a wise man.

The viij. Chapiter.

Keepe the kynges Commaundement I warne thee, and the othe that thou hast made to God.

SAlomon seemeth in this booke to fray men from intermedling with worldly affayres: wherewith he hath as much ado againe to exhort them to be doing. As we while we preach faith, doe vtterly dehort men from working, to set forth the true Sabboth. Againe, whē faith is once plāted, we must labour to shewe Christians how busie they must be to doe well to their neighbours, and how in this behalf they must keepe no Sabboth, but must be zelous in doing good workes, feruent in charitie toward their neighbours, and kēepe the Sabboth onely before God. So Salomō teacheth vs in this place, to doe nothing after our counselles and deuise, but all thinges according to the worde of

Salomons counsell in this booke.

God

God. And thus he is occupyed as it were through halfe the chapiter.

Obedience to the magistrate commaunded.

Where therfore he sayth: I marke or take heede to the kinges mouth or cõmaundement, he exhorteth mẽ to ciuile obedience. For this must be vnderstanded of a politike kinge or kingdome, although it may also be vnderstanded of God, but not of a subiecte: I (saith he) would keepe and obserue the kings commaundement, I counsel you to be in subiectiõ to the kyng, and not to follow your owne wayes. You haue inough to doe in the common weale, if you obserue that the kyng commaundeth, whom god hath ordeyned for you to heare. It is notably sayd of him ý kyngs mouth: because he will binde vs to ý obedience of his word. Whatsoeuer the magistrate commaundeth standing with the lawes, that doe thou (sayth he) and keepe the othe of god. Understãd such an othe as thou swearest by to God, and not God vnto thée. Obey (sayth he) the magistrate, as thou hast sworne vnto God. For he that sweareth to the magistrate, sweareth not to man, but vnto God. Here mayst thou see obedience to the magistrate trimly comprised

fed in the obedience to God. Euen as Paule will haue seruauntes obey their maisters, not as men, but as God.

Be not hasty to goe out of his sight, nor stand not in an euill thing, for he will doe whatsoeuer pleaseth him. Where the word of the king is, there is power. And who shall say vnto him, what doost thou?

TO goe from the face, is an Hebrewe phrase, much vsed in the Scriptures. In Ionas, in Iob, and also in Math. 18. chap. The seruaut went foorth frō his Maisters face, and founde his fellowe seruaunt. &c. Now to goe from ones face, is nothing els, but to deny, forsake, or refuse ỳ obedience we owe to another.

what it is to depart from the kyngs face.

Stand not in an euill matter.

COntinue not in disobedience, but abyde in obedience, as if he should say: Although the matter succēde not by and by as the king commaundeth, although the kyng fall or fayle, yet holde thou on, and see that the kynges commaundemet remayne in his maiestie & force, and doe not against it, because thou shalt not escape vnpunished.

For

For he doth what pleaseth hym.

We must obey the magistrate.

That is to say, in his Realme & kingdome: For he speaketh of ciuile gouernement. He will defende iustice: for he is ordeyned of God to this ende: therfore feare him. It is euen the same that Paule sayth to the Romaines the 13. They that resist purchase to thē selues damnation. Neither is it possible that he shall escape iudgement, that resisteth the magistrate. Therfore the safest way is to obey the magistrate without any more adoe. And he declareth the power of the kyng.

Whatsoeuer lyketh hym, that wyll he doe.

HE is ordeyned of God, therfore thou shalt not preuaile, nor be able to resist hym, though thou rayse tumulte, or make any insurrectiō against hym. Therfore eyther obey hym to thy profite and commoditie, or els flye from him to thy losse and incommoditie.

For the kinges worde is myghty.

THe worde or commaundement of the kyng, is a very Soldane. It commeth

of

of this worde Salith, which signifieth to beare rule. All this is sayd to the ende to exhort vs to be obedient, and to abyde in the thinges enioyned vs of the kinge, although matter fall not straight way as we wishe.

He that keepeth his commaundement shall know none euell thing.

THis is a conclusion of the thinges gon before. And it may be expounded two wayes. First thus: He that keepeth his commaundement will know none euell, that is, taketh heede and is well ware, ỹ he doe none euill. Secondly: He that keepeth his commaundement, shall suffer none euill. Both these sences are good, but I lyke the first better. They that obey, escape punishmēt.

The harte of the wicked discerneth tyme and iudgement.

THis worde Iudgement when it standeth alone, commonly signifieth reuengement, punishmentes. So in the xiij to the Romanes: They procure their owne dānatiō, (that is) they remaine not vnpunished. So is it here takē. The wyse man knoweth there is a tyme appointed Iudgemēt.

pointed of reuengement agaynst those ꝑ are disobedient, & no man should be able to escape that tyme. Therefore he standeth in feare of God and worketh none euill.

For to euery purpose there is a time and iudgement: for great is the misery of man vpō him. For he knoweth not that which shall be, & Who can tell him when it shall be?

He threatenneth with punishment those that obey not ꝑ magistrate.

THis is a commination and threatening of the disobedient with the punishmentes that shall followe, as though he should say: I counsell you to be obedient and in subiection to the Magistrates. And if any will not be obedient to them let him goe, but this vauntage he shall haue thereby that he shall wrap himselfe in many troubles, and incurre many miseries & calamities, He shall euery houre stand in feare and neuer escape. Therefore the best for him is simplie to obeye. For what shall it profit him to be disobedient, seeing he cā not escape punishmēt, as it fell out with the country men and Bowers. Thus ought preachers to exhort those that are seditious & rebellious.

For

For God hath ordeyned and appoynted a Iudgement, and a reuenge and punishment for all disobedient persons, which none shall escape. And this is a singular comfort to all Magistrates, howsekepers and schoolemasters, which hauing donne that in them lieth, and yet finde those vnder their tuition obstinat and incorrigible and escape from them, that they take it in good parte, knowing ỹ they shall not still escape vnpunished. God punisheth them that obey not magistrates.

For great is the misery of hym (that obeyeth not the kinges commaundement) for he knoweth not that which shall be.

By a generall sentence, he proueth a speciall, as if he should say: The disobedient turneth his eyes aside and seeth not the thing before his face. He seeth not what he doth, nor how greate an euell disobedience is. And he knoweth not what is to come. &c. that is, ỹ disobedient foreseeth not what is lyke to fall. His disobedyence causeth him to desier many thinges, he hopeth to attaine to great matters, and is deceaued. He promiseth him selfe all kinde of safetye, but

whē he thinketh leaſt thereon his iudgement and howre is at hand, and he perſeuereth in his diſobedience. To be ſhorte. The wicked contemneth preſent obedience, and loketh not on the punishment to come. But the wyſe man doth not ſo. For he knoweth what miſchief followeth the diſobedient, and therefore he obeyeth.

For man is not Lorde ouer the Spirit, to retayne the ſpirit, neyther hath he power in the day of death, nor deliueraunce in the battel, neither ſhall wickednes deliuer the poſſeſſers thereof.

Kinges haue long handes.

NOwe he declareth what he meaneth by that he ſayd before touching obedience to the kinge. The kinges worde is of great power, For it is Gods ordynaunce, that he ſhall not eſcape vnpuniſhed that deſpiſeth to be obedient. Man is not of ſuch power ý he is able to withſtand the king. Why therfore doth he not obey him? he cā not forbyd the ſpirit, ý is life, or ý breath of lyfe. He muſt ſtand to it, he ſhall not eſcape: He hath no power in the day of death, nor ſhall not eſcape in the day of battell. To be breefe.

briefe, God hath so many iudgmentes & so many wayes to punishe, that no man is able to escape his hands. And although he escape all other thinges, yet he setteth him out to the battell, to perishe there. He concludeth therefore that:

Wickednes can not deliuer the possessours thereof.

That is, therefore be thou obedient, and doe thy dutie, for there is no way of escape in being disobedient, least any mā should thinke that I teach any rebellion, or slacknes in doing our duetye.

All these things haue I considered, and haue geuen my mynde vnto euery worke that is vnder the sūne, and I sawe how one man hath lordshipp ouer an other to his owne harme.

He returneth to hys roll of vanities.

NOw returneth he to his Register, repeating againe the miseries of mans vanitie. Among all these thinges that I haue rehearsed, I haue seene this, ẏ man hath power ouer man to his owne hurt. This is to be referred to ẏ person ẏ is subiect, that is, it commeth to passe ma-

ny tymes, that Tyrantes beare the rule, and their rule tendeth to the afflicting of the subiectes. And yet notwithstanding, their commaundement must be fulfilled, and no tumult or busines to be made, for although the Prince were a good man, yet hath he no thanke, and not onely he is not thanked, but men also become the worse, euen lyke as the commons in these dayes, being deliuered from ỹ Bysshop of Rome his lawes and bondage. All men desire to haue tyranny taken away, but when they are deliuered, they can not abyde in that state neyther. He graunteth therefore that magistrates are euill in punishing of subiectes, but that they are notwithstanding to be borne and suffered.

We must obeye euen naughty magistrats.

Lykewise I sawe the wicked buryed, which walked in the holy place, and they were forgotten, that they had so behaued themselues. This also was a vanitie.

THe like place is in Amos the 6. chap. Woe be to the riche in Sion, which proudly enter into the house of Israell. To enter into the Church or house

The vnthankfulnes of men whē they haue good princes to succede euill.

of

of God, is an Hebrew phrase, signifyng one that beareth office or rule ouer the people of God, as in the 22 of Deuteronomy, the Ammonites are forbidden to enter into the house of God, that is, to beare any rule in ỳ cõmon weale of the Iewes. For the Ammonites were suffered to be among the Iewes, but not to beare any office. So likewise in this place. They were in the holy place, that is to say, they were rulers in the commõ weale. Therefore he sayth:

I saw the wicked buryed.

That is, how tyraunts dyed, and good Princes succeded, as Dauid did, after Saule was dead. But the wicked once deliuered from their tyrãny, forget their deliuery. Thus men acknowledge not their benefites. So we by and by had forgotten our good Prince Frederike the author of peace. No man remembreth what benefites they got by him, & from what mischiefes he deliuered them. We allwayes desire chaunge, neglecting and forgetting thinges present. All these thinges Salomon speaketh to this ende, that we may learne to know this world,

Frederike Duke of Saxony, a very good Prince.

and wyſely to vſe the folishnes therof.

This booke woulde be redd of new chosen gouernours.

Therfore this boke, new rulers ought chiefely to reade on, who hauing they? heades troubled with diuers opinions, thinke to rule the worlde after their owne deuises, and will exacte the vttermoſt of all men. But theſe men ought firſt to haue learned to know the worlde, namely, how it is vniuſt, ſtubborne, diſobedyent, vngracious, and to cõclude, vnkinde. Let them geue God thankes, if they can bryng but the hundreth parte, to the obſeruing of their lawes. So our Sectaries are not content with the preſent goodnes of God, with the preaching of fayth, and grace of the goſpell, but will diſturbe all the worlde with newe and vayne opinions. Therefore Salomons counſell is to teach vs their vanity, and to withſtand it as much as in vs lyeth. Yowbeit thoſe whom we are not able by our admoniſhmentes to conuerte vnto the fayth, and to kẽpe in the ſame, we muſt bid a dieu. For the euill are made euen obſtinate, and the worſe with continuall puniſhement. Therfore he ſayth:

Salomons counſell.

Becauſe ſentence agaynſt an euyll worke is not executed ſpeedely, ther-

therfore the hart of the children of mẽ is fully ſet in them to doe euill.

THis may be two wayes expounded. Actiuely thus, that is: the wicked holde on in doing euil, becauſe their puniſhement is deferred. Becauſe God taketh not vengeaunce by and by, as men doe, therefore they ware the prouder. Paſſiuely thus: we that ſée how ſuch goe vnpuniſhed, are filled with many euils, we take indignation, we are ouercome with tedioufnes, and ceaſe from doyng well. For both theſe thinges punifhmẽt put of, bringeth to paſſe. Firſt it maketh vs obſtinate and the worſe: nexte, it maketh other alſo that ſée theſe thinges, the ſlacker to doe their duties. Both ſenſes are good.

But though a ſinner offend an hundreth tymes, and God prolong hys dayes, yet I know that it ſhall goe well with them that feare the lord, and doe reuerence before him. But it ſhall not be well to the wicked, neyther ſhall he prolong his dayes: he ſhall be lyke a ſhadowe, becauſe he feareth not God.

Now

NOw he comforteth not man, but the godly hart. For man can not abyde this, nor suffer such ingratitude. Neither could Dauid beare with fowlishe Nabal, but purposed to kill him in his cogitatiō, in the first of the kinges the 25. He saith therfore, learne onely to know ỳ world. Thou canst not redresse or amende it, shee will not yelde to thee, thou must yelde to her, that thou mayst know it is ingratefull, and vnmyndefull of all pleasures and benefites: knowing thys, thou shalt doe well.

Punishmēt commeth once, or at length.

This therefore is that he woulde say by these wordes: though a sinner offēd an hundreth tymes, that is, though his punishment be deferred, and his vniust dealing not reuenged, yet shall he be punished in tyme to come. It cā not be chosen, but such vngrateful persons must be punished. Therfore be not thou so hasty to iustifye and make good the worlde, or to be reuenenged of all men. Holde thy selfe well apayde, if thou canst conuerte but the thousandth parte thereof, and make it thankefull. Let the worlde sinne, and not thou. For it shall not escape vengeaūce, no more then ỳ Iewes,

which

which murthered ỹ Prophetes & Christ, escaped the punishment of Vespasiane.

¶ And his dayes shall not be prolonged.

IT seemeth the punishment of the wicked is long differred, specially to those that are afflicted: but when the day and punishmēt of the wicked commeth, it seemeth thē to vs all to soone. As Iob saith: That the day of the wicked commeth suddenly. And in the 54. Psalme. Wicked men shall not lyue out halfe theyr dayes: that is, where they alwayes take enterprises in hand, and hope after many thinges, they dye before they bringe halfe their purposes to passe.

¶ There is a vanitie also which is done vpon the Earth: that is, there be righteous men to whom it happeneth as if they did the workes of the wicked: and there be also wycked to whom it commeth as if they did the workes of the iust, & I sayd: This also is a vanitye.

THese two thinges greately offend the mynde of man, that the punishment

of

A consolation against the offence that ỹ godly take when the vngodly persecute them.

of the vnthankfull is differred and ỹ good are entreated and dealte with all, as if they were wicked: good men hated and enuied, and the wicked had in estimation and reuerenced. And yet dayly so it commeth to passe. Heretofore men gaue the wicked Priestes all thinges, but now the Godly haue scarce any lyuing. They that teach schollers are not mainteined: those that trauell most to set the worlde at liberte, haue no thanke but are trodē vnder foote. But they that destroy and drowne the world in naughtines want nothinge. For now a dayes Souldyers are more dearely waged then good teachers. These thinges for this ende are repeted so often to enfourme mans mynde, & to enstruct ỹ good to learne what ỹ world is: Namely a furious beast and an vnkinde, which wareth fierce through benefites, exalting alwaies the wycked, and oppressing the good. And other thing then this, must we not loke for.

Therefore I prayſed myrth & gladnes becauſe a man hath no better thing vnder the ſonne, then to eate and drinke, & to reioyce. For this

is

is all he hath of his labour, all the dayes of his lyfe, that God geueth him vnder the Sunne.

He concludeth with his sentēce so often repeated.

THis is a repetition but very necessary, because he had declared so many sorrowfull thinges, that he might seeme to haue forgottē his purpose. The worlde is vnkinde, loking euer an other way. It lotheth thinges present, although they be good. It suffereth to toyle and weary thy selfe, and despiseth and persecuteth thee. Therefore mocke thou the worlde as it mocketh thee. Doe thine endeuour and duety, and let goe cares and sorrowfulnes. Be of good cheare & meary, knowing that the worlde dieth not to rewarde & consider the good.

And I applyed my mynde to know wisedome, and to beholde the busines that is done on the earth, that neyther daye nor night the eyes of man take sleepe.

THat is, while I was thus occupied, and vexed my mynde, and deuised how to gouerne & order all thinges prudentlye vpon earth, I gat nothing but sleaples nightes. And euen so shall it happen

pen vnto thée, if thou wilte not be meary, but weary thy selfe in thine owne wayes and deuises, for herein thou dost but as that fole did, which would beare all the worlde on his shoulders, ý is, would order and rule it, by his owne industry and lawes of his owne apointing. Why dost thou not rather commit all matters to God, & cease thy curyositie in other mens doinges?

Then I consydered all the workes of God, how man can not fynd out the worke that is wrought vnder the Sun. But the more he laboureth to searche it, the lesse he findeth, yea and although he thinke himself wise inough, yet he can not finde it.

THis is Salomons copiousnes. The sentence is lyke to that that wente before: Consider the workes of God, how no man can make straight that he hath crookened. Euen so here. Let no man take vpon him to redresse and amende all thinges. For this is the onely worke of God, and not mans. And impossible it is to bring man to doe ý which God alone doth. For man loketh not on

thinges

thinges present, neither is satisfyed with them, but loketh onely on thinges to come. Mans harte is fylled with dyuerse desyres. But God hath all thinges bounded and appointed, thinges present, and thinges to come. But we are neuer quyet with thinges present, nor satisfied with thinges to come, which is nothing els but to make thinges present, not present, and things to come, not to come, This thing made the Poetes to say, that all thinges were ruled by destenye, and imagine ȳ the goddesses called Parcæ brake of the webbe of our lyfe, euen when we would fayrest lyue. So Iulius Cæsar founde not, that is, accomplished not his deuyse, he was cut of from his purpose in ȳ middle of his consultation. For as he deuised to establish, or rather to restore the Roman publike weale he dyed, as he toke the matter in hande. Absolon castinge howe to compasse and get the kingdome, perished most miserably.

Vnhappye is the wisedome of men not ruled by God.

The nineth Chapiter.

All these thinges I cast in mine hart to vnderstand. There are righteous men

men and wise, whose seruaunts are in the hand of God, and yet no mā knoweth the loue or the hatred of that that is before him.

How thys saying, (mā knoweth not whether he is worthy of loue or hatred) is corrupted.

HEre we must well remember the argument, that we geeue not eare to them which drawe this texte to the worthynes of the hatred or loue of God, and teach men wickedly that no man can be certayne of the fauour of God. &c. Where Salomon speaketh onely of thinges done vnder ỹ Sunne, that is, among men, gouernance of ciuile lyfe. Sée (sayth he) what vntowardnes & crokednes is in this worlde: where I finde there are mē that gouerne iustly and wisely, whose seruauntes and subiectes yet are in the hand of God, and are prospered and defended, lyke Salomon and Dauid.

And yet no man knoweth whether he is loued or hated.

An admonition ỹ we iudge not of gods prouidēce, according to prosperity or aduersitie.

I Take bothe these wordes actiuely: that is to say, men are so vntowarde, that they acknowledge not the iust and wyse men, whose seruauntes they ser

God

God prospereth and gouerneth, for their benefactours, or their loue or hatred. They forget nothing so sone as benefites. Salomō gouerned wisely, in peace, in great plenty: As sone as he was dead, they complaine how he yoked thē. There they remembred none of his benefites.

What state or condition the worlde was euer in, it could not away with it. We may see by Italy, which whether it be at peace or at warre, it can away with neither. In tyme of peace, they procure wars: in time of warre, they would faine haue peace. So Germany is alwayes newfāgled. In ỹ beginning of ỹ Gospell all men gredily ranne to heare it: when it had spread it selfe abrode, euery where they lothed it, forgetting the benefytes that ensue and follow it. Now many men take parte with the Sectaries: and when they shall haue cōtinued their time they shall be disdained, and men will desyre other thinges. To be shorte, ỹ world cā not suffer neither good nor bad gouernment: Ye whom the Lord aydeth not in his gouernement, can not lyue one daye without daunger.

Therefore he ỹ will serue this worlde

either by wisdom, iustice, or whatsoeuer other good qualities, must looke for nothing but all maner of extremitie. Thus Dauid, & Salomō very good kings, loued ỳ good & hated ỳ bad, but ỳ people acknowledged not their loue, forgetting all their benefits & good turnes. Therfore S. Iohn truely wrote, that the world was geuen to naughtines, because their is nothing but disquietnes and all kinde of euell in it. Who therefore can lyke this lyfe, where men liue in so great daungers and vnquietnes all the dayes of their lyfe.

The world is geuen to naughtines.

They haue both lyke succesſe. For it happeneth to the righteous euen as to the wicked, to the good & cleane as to the vncleane, to him that offreth, as to him that offreth not. As it happeneth to the vertuous, euen so to the sinners: to him that forsweareth, as to him that feareth an othe. This is the woorste of all thinges that are donne vnder the Sunne, that it happeneth to all men alyke. Wherby the hart of man is fylled with wickednes, and fooliſhnes remaineth in their harts, all the

daies

dayes of their lyfe.

The vnkind worlde remembreth no benefites.

THis is againe a copiousnes of Salomon, as though he should saye: The worlde is all together vnquyet, and vnkinde, there is as small remembraunce of good men as of euell. This is to be vnderstanded on the worldes behalfe, not on Gods. The righteous men, that lyue are conteyned of the world, and in the world: But with God they stand in good case as he sayd before, He that feareth the Lord it shall goe well with him. The worlde rewardeth the good and the bad alyke.

This is the woorst of all things that are donne vnder the Sunne.

THat is, mans hart is to weake to beare this peruersenes. They that haue not the feare of God, can not patiētly suffer this ingratitude, and that there should be no difference betweene good mē and euill, but that it should happen to both alyke.

This is the cause therefore that mēs hartes are fylled with wyckednes;

THat is to say, with indignation Intollerable sorow. Because they haue

An admonition against the offence of vnkindnes.

not vnderstanding, nor can not frame them selues to doe as God doth, which sendeth rayne to the good and euyll alyke. I suppose that the Philosophers, & Monkes are here quipped, which because they could not beare with these thinges forsooke the worlde. They would not serue in such an vnkinde worlde. But Salomon will haue vs to be busyed in the worlde, and to know the worlde, and not to be feared with the ingratitude thereof from doing, but to follow our heauenly father which letteh his sunne to arise vppon the good and euill. Math. v.

And foolishnes remayneth in their hartes vntill they dye.

They that are offended with some mens vnkindnes wil benefite no man.

That is, they die without hauing done any worke, euen as though they had neuer lyued. They are lyke a shadow in this lyfe, profitable to no body. None enioyeth any part of their seruice or goodnes. And that they hope after, is preuented by death. So their ende is nothing but death: they leaue no goodnes for posteritie. But doe thou so order thy lyfe, that thou seeke to be meary, and to doe

good

good vnto others.

For among all men lyuing, hope is
chosen, for a lyuing dogge is bet-
ter then a dead Lyon.

By this place Salomon prepareth an exhortation for vs to doe good whyle we are able, that we be nothing moued with the ingratitude of the worlde, but that we holde on in doing our dutye, and haue a good hope and trust. Because there is hope in all men as long as they lyue, as if he should say: Doe not so contemne or despise this lyfe, that thou eyther despayre or forsake the fellowship of men, for hope or trust is the best thing y is among men. For as long as men are lyuing, there is hope. Therfore we must doe as much as we are able. For because of the remnaunt, we must serue y whole.

He exhorteth vs that we will not cease to doe good, though men haue vsed vs ingratefully.

Thus a good minister of the worde of God, for the good Citizes sake, preacheth the worde of God, although many blame the same. So if a good schoolemaster haue two good schollers, he must take paynes for their sakes, although he haue twenty other naughty disposed and hopelesses. Thus must eche magistrate also doe, if he

We must goe thorow in our vocation, euen for a fewes sake that be good.

can not bring the whole City to doe their dutie, yet he shal perhaps finde some one or two whom he shall bring to good passe. &c. This is it therefore that Salomon sayth: Let vs not be discouraged through dispayre, nor yet presume or take so much vpon vs. For we must not so despayre of the lyuing as we doe of ỹ dead, of whome there is no hope. We must beare with the importunities of men, and not despayre of all men, although many be wicked and vngratious.

For a lyuing dogge is better then a dead Lyon.

If thou canst not be a lyon be a whelp in thine office.

HE enterlaceth a prouerbe, meaning thus: It sufficeth to correcte & redresse somethyng in the worlde, as a lyue dog, although he be a beast of no great accompt, yet is he better then the great carcasse of ỹ stroggest Lyon. This we speake and vtter in this wyse. Better is a Sparrow sure in hand, then a Crane in doubt. Againe, in the Dutch toung: The childe must not be poured out with the water that it hath beene bathed in.

For the lyuing know that they shall die, but the dead know nothing at all,

all, neyther haue they any more a rewarde: for their remembraunce is forgotten. Also their loue and their hatred and their enuy is now perished, and they haue no more portion for euer in all that is done vnder the Sunne.

THe lyuing (sayth he) know they shal die, & therfore in their life they haue this hope. Let them not therefore put of frō day to day to worke and to doe well, lyke fooles & maycockes, which allwayes looke on other mens examples, and wyll neuer geue any ouer by themselues, before they see other begynne to doe well. We beneficiall to other, because thou knowest thou shalt dye.

The dead know nothing at all, neither are they rewarded any more.

SAinct Hierome writeth this place foolishly, to the rewarde of the dead which were in purgatory. For Salomō seemeth to thinke that the dead are without all manner of fæling. And I thinke there is not a place in the scripture of more force for the dead that are fallen in sleepe, vnderstanding naught of our state and condition, against the inuocation of Saintes A place to be noted against the inuocation of Saintes daparted.

and fiction of Purgatory. It is an Hebrew phrase:

They haue no more any rewarde.

WHich we thus expresse in ý Dutch speach: It is all in vaine with thé that be dead, All they can doe is of no auayle, they now can doe nothing that may profite them, lyke as is sayd other wheres: thy worke shall be rewarded. And as Paule sayth: your trauell shall not be in vayne.

¶ Their loue their hatred. &c.

VNderstand all these thinges actiuely as before, that is to say: the benefits they did by louing, by obeying. &c. are forgotten: And where as Saint. Hierome caueleth, that although they know not what is donne in ý worlde, yet they know the thinges that are donne in heauen, it is an erroz, and a folly.

An errour of Saint Hierome.

¶ Moreouer they haue no parte or portion in this worde.

THat is, they haue nothing to doe wt vs. He describeth the dead, as lyke to sensles Carkasses. He will therfore haue

vs

vs vſe this lyfe while we may, and to labour all ẏ we are able. We are compelled to leaue the greater parte of the worlde vnto Satan, we can ſcarce bring ẏ thouſandth parte vnto God. Therefore if the Lyon dye: kyll not the Dogg alſo.

Goe therefore and eate thy breade with ioy, and drinke thy wine wyth a cherefull hart. For now thy works pleaſe God.

Comfort often repeated.

AS Salomon is wont after a reherſal of vanitie in this worlde to ioyne immediately ſome comfort and exhortation for vs to be meary, and of good chære: euẽ ſo doth he in this place, as though he ſhould ſay: Seing we are conſtrayned to lyue in this peruerſitie it ſhall be beſt for vs, to be meary, and quyet. For we can not chaunge theſe thinges, neyther ſhall we any thinge preuayle, though we take neuer ſo much care there about. Ye calleth it thy breade and thy wyne, that thou haſt gotten through the bleſſing of God. So Eſay. 4. We will eate our breade. And Paule to the Theſſalonians: Let euery one eate his owne breade.

¶ For thy workes pleaſe God.

The wordes of the godly please God, ergo man knoweth & ought to beleeue þ God loueth him.

THis exhortation belongeth to þ Godly, that feare God, as if he shoulde saye. Thou that art Godly, doe that thou canst, forasmuch as thou knowest, thy woorkes shall please God. And this is the greatest wisedome that can be, to knowe that God will be mercifull to vs and that our woorkes and labours please him: as Paule sayth to the Romaynes the viij. The spirit beareth witnes to our spirit, that we are the children of God. For oneleſſe our hart place and settle it self in the good will and pleasure of God, it can neuer sweeten the bitternes therof. The harte remaineth euer bitter vnlesse it be thus filled alway with the good will of God. This place ought to haue beene inough to haue confuted these, which of the woordes set before, but manyfestly translated: Man knoweth not whether he be worthy of loue or hatred &c. would goe about to make men doubtfull and vncertaine, of Gods good will, and fauour towardes them.

At all tymes let thy garmentes bee white, and let thyne heade be anoynted with oyle.

Salomon

SAlomon speaketh here according to the vsage of that Countrey. The Romanes & Grækes commende purple and scarlet. But the Nations eastward and specially ý Iewes cõmende whyte apparell because they may be washed, and by reason of cleanlynes and puritye which they earnestly professed cuẽ as the Turk vseth lynnen garmentes, for the most gorgious. And we in the tyme of Popery at great feastes vsed Albes. This is it he meaneth. Be meary alwayes & vse such raymẽt as thou art accustomed at feastes and banquetting.

And anoynt thy hed with oyle.

whom Salomon exhorteth to be meary.

That is, vse also the oyles which God hath geuen thee. Againe he speaketh according to the maner of the countreye, who set great pryce and delight in their oyntmentes. This it is he sayth: Thou lyuest in the myddest of vanitie: Enioye therefore thy lyfe, and destroy not thy selfe with indignation, put away sorrow out of thy mynde. Thou canst not better mocke and geck ý worlde then to laugh when it is angrye. Let this be sufficient to thee that God is mercyfull to thee. For

what

what is the malice of this worlde to be compared with the pleasauntnes that is in God. Neyther doth he here perswade vs to any voluptuous lyfe, or to such royetousnes, as they vse which perceiue not this vanity (for that were to add oyle vnto fyre) but speaketh of the godly, which feele and haue experience of the vexations and greefes of this worlde. These mens hartes goeth he about to cheere and reare vp. These men counselleth he to be merry, not ỹ frowarde and vngodly, which otherwise lyue in all maner of sensualitie and voluptuousnes. The same he meaneth where he sayth:

Reioyce with the wife whom thou hast loued all the dayes of the lyfe of thy vanitie, which God hath geuen thee vnder the Sunne, all the dayes of thy vanitie. For this is thy portion in the lyfe, and in thy trauell wherein thou laboureſt vnder the Sunne.

As though he should say: Thou shalt carry no more with thee. So Paul in the first to Tymothy the 6. Hauyng foode and rayment, let vs therewyth

be

be content. For they that be not contēt herewith, but couet after other thynges, and afflicte their ſelues with indignation and cares, adde ſorow vnto ſorow, vanitie vnto vanitie, & at once depriue themſelues of all goodnes.

All that thyne hand ſhall finde to doe, doe wyth all thy power: for there is neyther worke, nor inuention, nor knowledge, nor wiſdome in the graue whether thou goeſt.

Diligence & continuance in labour commaunded.

THis is the other part of his exhortation which he obiecteth to thoſe idle perſons, who becauſe they ſée the worlde vnkinde and greuous, ceaſe of from labour, and will doe no more good. He cōmaundeth vs therfore to doe both, namely to be merry, and yet not ſo ỹ we loyter, but labour according as God hath commaũded. Gen. 3. Let vs take labour vnto vs, but put cares of mynde from vs, and be content with the preſent eſtate: adde a third thing, bere not thyne harte, becauſe thou ſéeſt the worlde is ingratefull. It is notable that he ſayth, ſhall finde, that is, follow not thyne owne counſell, but doe thinges as they fal out,

that

that which God commaundeth, & offreth taking no care for ought to come. Wherfore he sayth, with all thy power, thereby he requireth industry and diligence.

For in the graue there is no worke.

Against inuocation of Saintes.

AN other place, proouing that the dead haue no perseueraunce or feeling. There is (saith he) no deuise, no science, no knowledge, no wisedome there. Salomon iudgeth that the dead are a sleepe, and feele nothing at all. For the dead lye there accompting neyther dayes nor yeares, but when they are awaked, they shall seeme to haue slept scarce one minute.

What this worde infernus signifieth.

Hell signifieth a pit or graue, but properly (as I iudge) that secret withdrawing place, where the dead sleepe out of this lyfe, whence the soule goeth to her place (whatsoeuer it be, for corporall it is not) so that thou mayst vnderstād hell to be that place where the soules be kept, being a certayne graue (as it were) of ỹ soule, without this corporall worlde, as the earth is the sepulchre of ỹ body. But what maner of place it is, we know not. So in the 42. and 43. of Gen: I shal goe

downe

downe mourning into hell. Agayne: they shall bring my white head wyth sorow vnto the graue. For they that truely are holy, goe not into hell to suffer any thing there. The dead therefore are out of all place. For whatsoeuer is out of this lyfe, is out of place. Euen as after the resurrection, we shall be cleare from place and tyme.

where the sayntes that be dead are.

And I turned me vnto other things done vnder the sunne, and I sawe that in rúning, it helpeth not to be swifte, in battell not to be strong, to get liuing, not to be carefull, to get riches not to be wise, to be had in fauour, it helpeth not to be cunning, but that all lyeth in tyme and fortune.

THis is the summe and conclusion as it were of his discourse and roll of vanities, as if he should say: It makes no matter what a mã can doe. Therefore, follow not thyne owne wayes or deuises, but that thyne hand findeth, that is, continue in a certayne worke appointed and commaunded by God, leauing the thinges which may hinder thee therefrõ,

Then be our enterprises happye, when God prosperth them and gouerneth their successe.

as

as Samuel sayd vnto Saule: thou shalt be chaunged into an other man, and that thine hand findeth, that doe. &c. He prescribed him no rule or lawe, but whatsoeuer thing fell, to take it in good part, and to labour therein.

We must goe on with our vocatiō.

Thus doth Salomon teach vs in this place. Allwayes goe forwarde with that thou hast in hand, and belongeth to thy vocation. Thou art a preacher, or minister of the word of God, continue in reading the Scripture, and in teaching, be not drawen to any other trade before the Lord draw thee. For whatsoeuer ỹ Lord doth not say or commaūde profiteth not, which thing he proueth by his owne experience, saying: I sawe the swifte preuayled not by running, and many strong men, which yet lost the victory: I sawe also many notable wyse mē haue litle successe, many diligent and good gouernours which litle preuayled. *It lies not in the person how industrious or witty soeuer he be.*

All successe of matters is of God.

Many tymes the strong are ouercōmed in warre of the weake, and many tymes great hostes are slayne by small number of men, because the matter consisteth not

in

in strength. So Troye was a moste impregnable thing, wāting neyther strēgth nor power, and yet was it subdued and ouerthrowen. For the tyme was come that God had ordeyned it should so be. By the lyke reason, in the yeares passed, the Emperour toke and banquished the kyng of Fraunce, notwithstanding he farre passed him in strēgth of mē. Where he saith, that running helpeth not the swifte, it is an Hebrew phrase, for with them to rūne, is to beare office, as Paul to the Corinthians: So runne I, not as at an vncertaine thing. Agayne: I haue fynished my course.

Fraunces kyng of Fraunce takē prisoner. 1525.

To be had in fauour it helpeth not to be cunning.

That is, many are skilfull in artes & good learning, and yet they are not regarded, no man saeth to them, or taketh care for them. So with vs the worde is plentifull, there are many good wyttes, and yet we can not bring all men to the fayth: and yet not withstanding we must not leaue of from preaching the Gospell. For God raigneth euen in weakenes, he shall gouerne our doinges & bring them

Many notable artificers cōtemned.

to passe. The Lorde is able to kindle a greate fyer of flame, so we will preserue sparcles. We are also meruelously troubled and vexed in our myndes about getting our liuing. One because he would be rich, becõmeth a Printer, and loe he consumeth that he hath. It is not therefore sufficient to be wise and industrious. For many singular wyttes, and excellent artificers, are vtterly despised. This is it he sayth:

The Successe of all thinges dependeth on fortune.

we must trauell, and leaue all successe vnto God.

That is, I cã not determine or apoint what successe I shall haue, when I haue donne all I can. Do thou onely y is thy duetye. God shall finde a tyme to vse thy labour. We cã not iudge of these thinges, we must labour, but appointe no ende and effect of our worcking.

Man knoweth not his tyme, but as the fyshes which are takẽ with the angle, & as birdes that are catched with springesse, so are they snared in the perelous tyme, when it cometh svddenly vpon them.

Understand

Vnderstand, this tyme to be not onely the very end of life, but euery howre, and occasion, as if he should say: Thou must labour, although thou know not what will followe thereof. Therfore applie thy selfe to learning, and if God so appoint, he will giue thy study fruite and successe. The lyke we must do in all other trades & exercises of lyfe labouring and commytting all successe vnto God. For the tyme of successe is not reuealed to vs.

And as fishes. &c.

With two feate similitudes, he proueth that most tymes matters fall out cõtrary to our deuises and weening: the fishe is desirous of meate, & deuoureth the hooke. The byrdes lykewise without all feare goe on feeding, and thinke no thing of the gryne, and sodenly they are caught: So we when we haue chosen and hoped for that we thinke good, are deceaued. And when we thinke euil is toward, then goodnes is at hand, And we rushe in to those thinges, which afterwarde we can not get out of, in such a wyse, as we perceaue not, how we be circumuented. And all this commeth to passe, because

All aduersities cã not be foreseene

we knowe not the tyme and howr. So that experience teacheth vs, how thinges are not ordered by our deuises, but most tymes against them. And hence procedeth ỹ saying of misfortunat folke: I thought not it would haue so fallen out.

This wisdome also haue I seene vnvnder the Sunne, and me thought it a great thinge. There was a lyttle Citie, and a fewe men within it: So there came a great kinge and beseeged it, & made great fortes against it: and in the Citie there was found a pore mā, but wise, which through his wisdōe deliuered the Citie: Yet was there no body that had any respecte vnto such a simple man. Then sayde I, wysedome is better then strength. Neuertheles a poore mās wysdome is despised, & his wordes are not heard.

Foolishnes & vnkyndnes of the people reprehended.

I suppose ỹ this is set after his cōclusion in stead of an example, whereby he declareth all that he hath sayde before. It is a generall example, the lyke whereof is foūde in many histories. For thus in the ix. Chapter of the Judges, a woman deliuered

liuered the Citie ſaying Abimelech the king, with a peece of a mylſtone. He calleth it great wyſedome, becauſe indede that wiſedome of gouernaunce is very greate that delyuereth a litle Citie, of ſmall force, frō valyaunt enemyes. But to forget this wiſedome, and ſo great benefites, as moſt times it happeneth, is greate vnthankfulnes. Thus Themiſtocles employed many benefites vpon his Countrey men but he founde greate ingratitude for the ſame. Thus Dauid benifited all Iſraell, ſo did Salomon. But afterward forgetting ſo great benefites, tenne of the Trybes forſoke the houſe of Dauid, Wherefore to pleaſure and benefit ỹ worlde, is nought els, but to loſe our benefites, and to caſt golde into durt and Pearles before hogges. The beſt is therefore to be mery, and to labour for ỹ tyme preſent, caſting of all care of things to come. For it were better that my benefites periſhed, then I to periſh with my benefit alſo, as ſayth Phædria, in the comedye entituled Eunuchus. Themiſtocles.

And no man remembred the man.

IN dede the wyſe mans wordes were

we knowe not the tyme and houre. So that experience teacheth vs, how thinges are not ordered by our deuises, but most tymes against them. And hence proceedeth ỳ saying of misfortunat folke: I thought not it would haue so fallen out.

This wisdome also haue I seene vnvnder the Sunne, and me thought it a great thinge. There was a lyttle Citie, and a fewe men within it: So there came a great kinge and beseeged it, & made great fortes against it: and in the Citie there was found a pore mā, but wise, which through his wisdōe deliuered the Citie: Yet was there no body that had any respecte vnto such a simple man. Then sayde I, wysedome is better then strength. Neuertheles a poore mās wysdome is despised, & his wordes are not heard.

Foolishnes & vnkyndnes of the people reprehended.

I suppose ỳ this is set after his cōclusion in stead of an example, whereby he declareth all that he hath sayde before. It is a generall example, the lyke whereof is foūde in many histories. For thus in the ir. Chapter of the Judges, a woman deliuered

liuered the Citie ſaying Abimelech the king, with a peece of a mylſtone. He calleth it great wyſedome, becauſe indede that wiſedome of gouernaunce is very greate that delyuereth a litle Citie, of ſmall force, frō valyaunt enemyes. But to forget this wiſedome, and ſo great benefites, as moſt times it happeneth, is greate vnthankfulnes. Thus Themiſtocles employed many benefites vpon his Countrey men but he founde greate ingratitude for the ſame. Thus Dauid benifited all Iſraell, ſo did Salomon. But afterward forgetting ſo great benefites, feme of the Trybes forſoke the houſe of Dauid, Wherefore to pleaſure and benefit ỹ worlde, is nought els, but to loſe our benefites, and to caſt golde into durt and Pearles before hogges. The beſt is therefore to be mery, and to labour for ỹ tyme preſent, caſting of all care of things to come. For it were better that my benefites periſhed, then I to periſh with my benefit alſo, as ſayth Phædria, in the comedye entituled Eunuchus. Themiſtocles.

And no man remembred the man.

In dede the wyſe mans wordes were

heard, while he gaue good counsell, but that done, he was by and by forgotten.

The tenth Chapiter.

The wordes of the wyse are more heard in quietnes, then the crye of him that ruleth among fooles.

Exhortations & reprehensions mixed togither.

THe effect of this place is to comfort and exhort them which are troubled with worldly affaiers, next to rebuke those which are a let and hindraunce, that wise and godly mens counsels goe not forward, as he beganne with the example of a poore man, that wisely brought a great matter to passe, but assone as ỹ benefite was past, it was forgotten. For all present estate of men as was sayde before, is despised. Therfore Salomō perceauing this matter, sayth: weary not your selues, you cā bring the world to none other passe, nor yet the men therein. If matters procēde according to your good deuise, commytte them vnto God.

The wordes of the wyse are heard in quietnes. &c.

The

The wordes of the wise are not regarded, therefore they are compelled to harken to the wordes of a foolishe ruler. The crying of a captayne preuayleth among foles, and a foolishe prince heareth a foolishe Counsellers wordes, because he speaketh that which pleaseth him. Thys I say, that thou must consider, as is sayd in the prouerbes: The foole wyll not heare, vnles thou speake that he phansieth in his harte, because affections rule all in the foles hart, therefore he regardeth not what thou sayest, vnles thou say that he desireth. For they which thus are led with their owne affections & wysdome, will heare nothing els. Therefore thou shalt not preuaile, thou shalt not be heard: where myndes are not quyeted, that is to say, blinded with affections. So now a dayes, it is in vayne to write agaynst the Sectaries and heretikes, for thou shalt doe no good. Which thing Paule affirmeth also: A man that is an heretike, after once or twise warnyng auoyde. &c. And it falleth not thus out in matters of religion onely, but also in ciuile affayres. Thus it fareth in worldly affayres: if thou geue good counsell, thou

wyse mens counseiles despysed.

Counsell taketh no place but in myndes wholsomly settled.

shalt not preuayle, nor be heard, but with Neutrals, whose myndes are setled, and will take parte wyth none. But setled myndes at quyet can truely iudge that ỹ crying of a Captayne is but folishe. We must abyde therfore till the affections be appeased, for then shall he heare. Euen as troubled water is not cleare, but if thou wilt see the bottome, thou must tarry till the water be setteled: so all men that haue conceaued any persuasion in their mynde, will not be dissuaded agayne, vnles that conceit of theirs, wherwith they be as it were bewitched, be put away. This Salomon in an other place expresseth in thys wyse: It is better to meete a Beare, or a Lyon robbed of her whelpes, then a man trusting in his owne foolyshenes.

Better is wisdome then weapons of warre, but one sinner destroyeth much good.

Force without counsell can not stand.

This sentence he hath proued with the ensample gone before. And at thys day all that follow warres, proue the same, namely that warlyke engines are naught worth without wisdome & counsell,

sell, and that wysedome is of more force and auayle in warre, then is strength. For there are many suddaine and diuers chaunces and awaytes. &c. Thus ỹ Romanes boast ỹ they ouercame the world, not by strength, but by wysdome. Wisedome therfore beareth the stroke in thys worlde, but shee is not heard or cõsidered.

For one Synner destroyeth much good.

For both in peace and warre there are such vnthryftes and naughty persons, as disturbe all thinges. There is a counseller stãdeth vp and speaketh for peace, straight way a thrasonicall mate & lubber dasheth all, whom thou shalt resiste but in vayne, because men are led wyth their owne affections, and will geue no eare to such as geue contrary aduise, so that as Homere sayth, the greater parts most tyme preuaileth agaynst the better. Peruerters of good counsell.

Dead flyes cause the most precious oyntment to stinke.

This is a prouerbiall sentence against fooles, howbeit Salomon hath very hard translations. The translatiõ would haue Euill cõsellers reprehended.

haue bene more comely, if he had added, according to the prouerbe, It is as men say. The prouerbe is taken from things in vse among this people, which accompt and esteeme oyntmentes among their most precious thinges. It seemeth to vs the similitude is the more vnpleasaunt and straunge, because we haue litle vse of such thinges as that nation had. Lyke therfore as flyes destroy a most precious oyntment, so some vnthrift and naughtipacke destroyeth the best counsell in a common weale, in the Parliamēt chamber, and in warre. Therefore as we are constrayned to beare with such noysome flyes, so are we compelled to beare with such pestilent counsellers.

Therefore a lytle folly sometyme, is better then wisdome and glory.

To dote in some thyng is holde for high wysedome.

This is a consolatiō against such chaūses and naughtye Counsellers, Ye calleth it lytle folly because of the litle tyme it endureth as the Poetes vse to say To seeme fooliſh in place where, is holden for high wisedome. Therefore when thou seest a naughty man preuaile

in

in the Counsell, or in the Parlament house &c. let thy counsell geue place, and leaue of thy wisedome, because thou seest it is not lyked and vere not thy selfe. It is better thou seeme a fole for a season: and let them go on in their folishnes, because they wil giue no eare to thee. For by force thou canst not preuaile. For a fole will be led by no counsell, vnlesse thou speake according to his mynde. Therefore thou must let them alone whē thou hast shewed thy counsell, and donne what thou cāst. For if thou wilte goe through wyth thy purpose, ỹ shalt wrath these waspes, and meete with an angry Beare, and endaūger thy self without necessitie. These counsels be very good for vs, which dwell in this ingratefull worlde, which harketh not to our good counsell, whatsoeuer we saye or threaten.

Glory signifieth not onely fame, but pompe, ornamentes, & riches, which are cause of fame. So Math. 6. God so cloetheth the lylyes of the feelde, that Salomon in all his glory, that is to say, in all his ryches and pompe, was not so arayed. Glorye.

¶ The harte of a wise man is as his

right

right hande, but the hart of a foole is at his left.

The difference betweene wise men and fooles.

THis also is a kinde of Prouerbe, that is, a wise man hath his harte in hys owne rule and power. If he perceaueth that they are foolish, and wil geue no eare vnto him, he can for a tyme holde his peace. He cã vse his wisedome according to the place and persons, and as he shall perceaue his counsell is lyke well or euil to succéede. But a fole is not master of his owne hart, but according to his affection, will runne through with them. It is a great matter to rule and moderate ỹ harte, which no man doth or can doe, but he that is wel acquainted with the world and hath an eye to Gods iudgementes.

A foole walking in the way and being him selfe neuer so much a foole thynketh yet that all other are fooles.

Many such glorious braggers in Princes Courtes.

THat is, he is not content that himselfe preuaileth with his naughty counsel, so that thou must yelde to him, but also thou shalt be cõpelled to beare with him, in being glorifyed for his foolishnes, and naughty counsell, and in shaming the wysedome

wisedome of other men. For if thou geue good counsell, he will straight way be vpon thy back, and reproue thy wise saying and counselling. But aūswere thou thus: I haue shewed my counsell, I compell no man, but haue said that I thinke good. First therefore a fole will not heare thee: nexte he will throng with his owne imagination: and last of all, whatsoeuer thou sayst to the contrary, (as thou art bound) but not to follow it, if thou thinke it will not preuaile, he will deride it, & reproche it as foolishe and wicked. This we see in our dayes and finde true by our selues.

Therefore if the spirit of thy superiour haue his purpose against thy mynde: be not thou discontented, for to giue place pacifieth great euill.

THis we thus expresse in our prouerb: He that can haue patience will be a wyse man. He saith therefore, if their spirite preuaile, that is to say, their force or counsell, be not impatient or angry, leaue not thy place, remayne by thy selfe and continue. For if thou resist, and wilt haue thy counsell followed and allowed, thou

Fooles must not be strīue with, but yelded to, for a tyme.

thou shalt but vexe the waspes onely, & kicke against the pricke, for it is a greate pointe of wysedome, to dissemble & giue place. For it allayeth many euels which by so being quyet, that is by geuing of place be caulmed, and at length of them selues come to silence, which otherwise would stirre vp much trouble, if thou wouldest withstand them. Thus the Romans glory in their Fabius, which by suffring and leasure ouercame Hannibal. Thus our Frederick Duke of Saxonye, by keeping silence and lying still, kepte downe the Erfordians, and was auenged of them. Thus Virgill also sayth: All fortune must bee ouercõmed by suffering. For such sayinges as these are taken out of the experience of this worlde.

* There is a great euell that I haue seene vnder the Snune, namely ignorance, that is much seene among Princes. For some foole is aduaũced to great honour, and the riche syt in the dust. I haue seene seruãts on horse backe and some Princes lyke seruauntes goe on foote.

It

IT is no meruell sayth he, if the violēce or counsell of fooles preuaileth agaynst wise mē and them that giue good counsel. For I see few princes but they are fooles, and take no wise way in gouerning their charges. Thus ỹ foole ruleth euery where in the Counsell chamber, in the Princes courte. &c. The world is foolishe and gouerned with fooles, & with foolishe opinions: Wherefore if thou counsell them otherwise, they will not heare thee. If thou holde on, the more is the foole moued, & for hatred will doe that shall turne his Countrye to greate hinderaunce. The rych that sytt in the dust, he vnderstandeth to be such as ought to beare rule, because they knowe well how to gouerne. He cauleth them Seruauntes that ought to bee ruled, as though hee shoulde say: They which ought to be ruled, them I see set aloft and in authoritie, being but slaues and fooles, and wise men want, and scarce haue any lyuing. Therefore when thou seest such Centuaries and Thrasones beare rule, which ought rather to doe the seruice, meruell not at it, remember this is the kingdome of the worlde.

All thynges replenished wyth folly.

whome he vnderstandeth by riche men, & seruauntes.

He

He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it, and he that breaketh a hedge, a serpent shal sting him. He that remoueth stones shall hurt himselfe thereby, & he that cleaueth wood, shall be in daunger thereby.

Gouernāce a perillous enterprise.

HEre Salomon coucheth as it were a heape of prouerbes together, all which he applyeth to his purpose, saying as it were: it commeth to passe in this worlde, as these prouerbs declare. Whatsoeuer thou doest in this worlde, it commeth to passe, as sayth the prouerbe: He that diggeth a pit. &c. Men doe not escape from it without hurte. Lykewyse to rule men, is as to breake vp an hedge, where many tymes, it chaunseth that a Snake stingeth him. Wherefore, if mishap betyde thée, play the slackarde neuer the more, but remember that thus it goeth in this worlde. For to rule men is in Gods power onely. Therefore, he that is called to auctoritie, must remēber that he taketh that in hand that más wit can not compasse. For the hartes of men are not in our power. Onely they which haue the feare of God in them are easely gouer-

gouerned. This prouerbe is taken from thē that dig pits or graues, whoſe chaūce it is many tymes vnawares to fall into ỹ ſame. So to beare rule in this worlde, is to dig a pit: there be thou fenced, & knowe thou art in perill. Which excepte thou wilt doe, thou ſhalt fall into many ſuddē and vnforeſeene daungers. For daungers foreſeene leſſe hurt vs. Thus dyd Demipho in Terences Phormio well geeue warning of. Wherfore (ſaith he) All mē whē they are in moſt proſperity, moſt chiefely conſider with thēſelues how to ſuffer and beare aduerſitie, daungers, loſſes, baniſhement. When he commeth out of the coūtrey, let him alway thinke, my ſonne may haue cōmitted ſome faulte, my wyfe may be dead, my daughter may be ſicke: theſe be common caſes, and it may be that they ſhall not be ſtraunge vnto thee. Whatſoeuer falleth out otherwiſe thē thou hopedſt for, take for a vaūtage. That if any thing ſo happen, thou mayſt ſay, thus I thought and looked for, and thinke no ſtraūge thing is happened vnto thee. And if any good hap or fortune betyde thee, take it for a dayly gayne.

Gouernāce muſt not be caſt of, for the perils therin.

Thou must not straight way leaue of digging, though thou fall vnawares into the pit. The lyfe of man is full of daungers: and as in breaking downe an hedge, it is to be feared least some Serpẽt lying hidden may sting vs: so in gouerning a common weale, we must beware we be not hurt. If thou hap to be bitten or hurte, thou must beare it: for it is no newes.

He that remooueth stones.

An other similitude.

He that turneth stones, some hurteth his hand or fæte. He vnderstandeth such huge stones, as can not be remoued without some great hurt. So to haue to doe in ciuile matters, is to turne such stones. Therefore when thou art hurte, say: If I had not turned these stones, I had not beene hurte, but because I moue and turne them, what maruell is it that I am hurt? If thou be an housholder, remember thou must turne this stone also. That that followeth is lyke.

He that cleaueth wood, shall be in daunger thereof.

Daunger ioyned with gouernãce.

That is, things publike cã not be wielded without hurt and daunger. Best

is

is therefore to Bulwarke and fence the mynde, and to loke for whatsoeuer falleth out, that if any thing chaūce wel in ỹ common weale, we take it as a myracle. Benefites, the more they happen beyond our expectatiō, the more they reioyce vs, euen as mishaps the lesse hurte vs, the more they are foreseene. Let vs therfore thinke we shall be alway in hazarde, and not still in good case.

If the yron be so blunt, that one can not sharpen it, he must then put to more strength: but the excellencie to directe a thing is wisdome.

AGayne he comforteth them that are in office: Euen as an yron tole cankred with rust is hardly made cleane and sharpened, so is the worlde lyke a rustye yron, and hatchet full of gappes, loose in the handle or helue, which no man can worke well wyth. This is a very handsome similitude. And as it is a very labourious thing, and troublesome to cut or hewe with such a rusty and hacled hatchet: so is it a wofull and miserable state to be a gouerner in a realme or an house. For it is an vnprofitable & marred tole,

In hard thyng to gouerne a corrupt cōmon weale.

and yet muſt we be doing, in, and about the ſame. So when men are euyll and full of naughty affections, there is neede of great wiſoome to rule & moderate thē. Thus he ſayth: If it be ruſhyed & blunt, then is there nœde of a wyſe woꝛkmā, that is: It muſt be a cunning workmā that can well whet out an olde ruſtye Axe. So it is nēdefull he be a wyſe man that can handſomly vſe ſuch euill toles, that is the woꝛlde, and ſuch peruerſe and vntoward men. Men by nature are diſſpitefull. But God hath authoꝛized ſuch men, that at leaſt they myght therfoꝛe be obeyed. Foꝛ he ſayth: I will that thou be obedient vnto this man, foꝛ if thou diſobeyeſt him, thou contemneſt me. But yet they obey not by this neyther. Therfoꝛe publyke gouernāce oꝛ howſe keping is but ſuch a ruſtie tole as is ſpoken of. Vſe therfoꝛe the ſame hatchet thou haſt, ſins thou cāſt handle none other, as ſaith the Pꝛouerbe. He that hath no lyme, muſt builde his wall with doonge or lome. If thou be an houſeholder, oꝛ an officer, thinke thou haſt this ruſty iron, that is, ſuch as thou cāſt not rule, noꝛ wil be ruled, occupie it, and cut with it as ỹ

Great wildome is needefull, to coꝛrect euill manners.

canſt

canſt that thou maiſt at leaſt kéepe ſome parte and ſhew of a common weale. For men ſhall neuer be able to doe ſo well in a common weale, but much euel ſhall remaine there ſtill. Therefore he muſt be a good workeman that can ſo ſharpen an olde ruſtye iron, that yet he can vſe it handſomely. Theſe are the thinges that muſt comforte vs in ſuch caſes.

If the Serpent byte when he is not charmed, no better is a babler and blab of tounge:

This perteyneth alſo to the common weale. As a ſerpẽt (ſayth he) vncharmed, that is, vnknowen or vnlooked for, (for a ſerpẽt ỹ is charmed byteth not, becauſe he obeyeth the charmers voyce) euen ſo byteth a blabbe of his toung. Neyther is a blab of his toung better then a byting Serpent, for he is not maſter of his owne tounge, he curſeth or ſpeaketh euell of his ruler and gouernour. Euen ſo it fareth whether in publike or priuate gouernaunce. If thou be an houſekéeper, thou ſhalt doe many thinges, that ſhal offende thy wyfe, and familie &c. Emongſt whom thou ſhalt fynde ſome that wil de-

A precept how to beare ſclaſhders and backbytyng.

praue the well doinges, which the euill disposed will carry abrode to the Citizens and neighbours and this also thou shalte be compelled to beare with. Thou shalt to thy power withstand it, but if thou be not able to let it, thou must suffer it. It is in dede a tedious and greuous case to be thus dishonestly rayled at by tounges of ill willers, & thou not wytting it, but what shalt thou do? These slaunders and detractors thou canst not stop. Onely stop thine eyes & eares, & do that thou art able. Euen as we be compelled to beare with the wordes and workes of men that resist vs. For the worlde will not cease to persecute magistrates, and those that giue them good counsell.

The wordes of a wyse mans mouth haue grace, but the lips of a foole deuoureth him.

The deuises of wyse mē. hindred by ỹ sclaundering of fooles.

That is to say, a wise man ordereth his doinges well, and with a kynde of grace, but because he is amonge euill tounges, he hath litle successe. For the detractor commeth, and deuoureth and ouerwhelmeth ỹ good mā with his words: for so referre I this worde him, to ỹ wise

man

man & not to ẏ foole. For the word of the wyse that hath in it such grace, is made in effectuall through the taulke of ẏ foole. If a good and wise man geue good counsell, the slaunderer and deprauer cōmeth, and ouerturneth his counsell. So happened it to Paule in ẏ Actes, when he was in shippwracke. Menne and bretherne (sayth he) you ought to haue obeyed me, and to haue ryd it out in Creta. &c. To conclude, the foole deuoureth ẏ wyse, and the woorse syde still preuaileth

* The beginning of his woordes is foolishnes, and the latter ende of his taulke is madnes.

That is to saye, thus it happeneth to fooles, which will seeme wyse, and iudge all other fooles in cōparison of thē selues: whether they begin, or make an ende, yea all their taulke is nothing but foolishnes. And ẏ more a foole goeth about to seeme wise, the more he plaieth ẏ foole: and yet he preuaileth aboue the wyse mā and deuoureth his good counsels. Euen as the Pharises preuailed against Christ the best preacher, the Iewes and false Apostles against the Apostles. The Arri-

Fooles deuises preferred before wyse mens.

ans

anes deuoured the good teachers in their dayes. And we in these dayes preache Christ, but the heretikes persecute and deuoure vs. But let vs yet loke for greater matters, taking it for a vauntage in the meane season, that yet we retaine & kepe some godnes, for that some holde fast the true doctrine.

¶ The foole multiplieth woordes.

Fooles be full of woordes.

A Wise mā dispatcheth briefly and in fewe woordes what he thinketh, for truth is content with plaine and simple vtteraunce, but fooles haue aboundance of woordes, and can by no woordes be made holde their peace, but for one woorde will geue a thousand. Thus Christ vsed allwayes in fewe woordes to aunswere the lawyers and Pharisies when they slaunderously sayd, his doctrine was of the deuell, and not of God.

¶ Man knoweth not what is before him, & who can tell him what shall be after him?

That is, man seeth not things present, which are in his sight, he is neuer cōtented with thinges present, his eye is still

ſtil on other men, and on things to come, leauing that God hath geuen and appoin ted for him. Now is the Goſpel geuē vs, but we geue our ſelues to other thinges, but of this hath inough bēne ſaid before.

The labour of the fooliſhe doth weary him, for hee knoweth not how to get into the Citie.

THat is, although fooles multiplye wordes and preuaile, yet get they naught thereby but multiplication of toyle and labour. They ſcorne & caſt day and night with themſelues how to bring their matters to paſſe, but this trauell doth nothing, but more and more diſquy-et them. And theſe two contraries are to be well noted. The fole of hys labour reapeth miſery, the wyſe man myrth. When the fole ſeeth that his deuiſe com-meth not to paſſe, he is vexed and trou-bled in his mynde: for he can not, nor knoweth not how to commit the ſucceſſe vnto God. But the wyſe mā at all times is ſtill of one mynde, becauſe he knoweth that thinges be not ruled by mās coūſels and deuiſes, but by the will and appoint-ment of God. To him therefore he com-

The foole is vexed with his la-bour, but ꝯ wyſe man reioyceth in hys.

mitteth

mitteth all ſucceſſe & effect of his deuiſes.

They know not how to goe into the Citie.

Fooles know not of what weight matters are, nor what is needfull to be done.

THis is an Hebrew phraſe, ſuch as is to be ſeene in the Pſalmes: and the way of the citie they haue not knowē, that is, they goe vp and downe wādring, and can not hit on the way how to come to reſt: For all wayes lead to ſome place where men are dwelling, but they wander in all wayes, they continue in none, whereas wiſe men abide in the way, and kæpe their place, although diuers daungers and impediments happen, becauſe they foreſaw this woulde come to paſſe. Let euery man therefore goe about hys buſineſſe mearely. He ſhall mearely ſo doe, if he remember he is in the worlde, in the middle of daungers. &c. Thus miſhap is ouercomed, before it come.

Woe to thee ó land, when thy king is a childe, and thy princes eate in the morning.

what a diſcommoditie a fooliſhe prince is, & greuē to voluptuouſneſs.

HEtherto we haue heard that ỹ worlde goeth thus that fooles chiefly preuaile and beare the ſwinge, although to they^r great

great losse, that when they haue oppressed the wordes of the wyse, they paye for their folishnes. Therfore, where thinges thus goe, it is very daũgerous for ỹ king to be a childe, seeing among such aboundaunce of fooles, the kyng also is vnwise. In this case stand the kingdomes of Germanie and Spayne at this day, where ỹ Princes iudged of all other to be most wyse, rule and doe all for their owne cõmoditie and auayle. The residue can doe nothing but ryde on a great horsse, kæpe harlots, quaffe. &c. committing all matters to their Coũsellers, which seeke but their owne gayne, nothing regarding the common weale. And thus all Germanie lyeth waste as it were, hauing in her no ciuilitie of manners, no care of well bringing vp their youth, the lawes & all good discipline and artes being decayed, and no consideration of Iustice being had.

A good Prince is a great gifte, which considereth and vnderstandeth how to benefite his countrey, which foreseeth what is fit for euery man, that all things may be done and ordered according to lawes, that all men may haue and enioye theyr right. And yet all thinges shall not succéde

A good Prince is a great gifte of God.

cæde with this man, yea many thinges shall chaunce contrary, but for all that, let him not cease from his purpose, but holde on to doe that he is able, according to the forme aforesayd. For such a good and a wise Prince or king was Salomó: in so much that he wrote prouerbes for the instruction of youth, and yet had he but his labour for his trauell. If then matters succæde no better with the best Princes, what will they doe where the kyng is but a childe, and doth no exployte worthy for a Prince?

Whose princes eat in the morning.

That is, which distribute not their doinges into their tymes: which haue no care how the affayers of the common weale fare, so they may doe well. Yea if any man be desirous to geue the Prince good counsell how to procæde, they wyll sæke to oppresse him. In the morning, is as much, as first and formost, afore all other thinges: for the morning is the first houre to labour and doe any thing in. These men eate in the morning, when they first of all make prouision for their owne game and belly: and as for the affaiers

faiers of the kyngdome, they are put of till the euening, that is, they are handled laſt of all.

Bleſſed art thou ô lande, when thy king is the ſonne of Nobles, & thy Princes eate in tyme, for ſtrength, and not for drunkennes.

THeſe be Hebrew phraſes, the childe of lyfe, the childe of death, the childe of the yeare: euen ſo the childe of Nobles, is he that hath nobles of his kynne. For the Hebrew worde ſonne, we commonly expreſſe by this worde hath, as in Ezechiell, it is ſayd of Pharao: I am the ſonne of wiſe men, that is, I haue many wyſe men. The Hebrew word Horim ſignifieth men in white. For it was the māner of the people in the Eaſt, to weare white apparell, as the Romaynes vſed purple and ſcarlet. Princes therefore are called white of the garment they weare, euen as ſome of the Romaynes were called Torquati of the baudrikes they weare about their neckes.

Whoſe Princes eate in their tyme.

THat is, which preferr not their owne belly before the affayres and cares of Princes Courtes.

the

the kingdome, seeking for their owne aduauntage. But where are they founde? Such couetousnes raigneth in the courte, the nobles are couetousnes her self. This maist ỹ see in our Princes, where kingdomes are wasted and consumed, & great men and nobles are enriched, By reason of these pestelēt Peeres, we can not bring to passe that poore people may be prouided for, that Schooles may be sett vp & mainteined, that poore maydens maye haue competent Dowries appointed thē, and such other workes of Godlines may be accomplished: where they not withstanding can erhorte and get of Princes euery thing. Truely therefore is ỹ lande blessed, whose Peeres eate in due tyme, and not for ryotousnes, that is wich are content so to vse the Princes liberalitie, that they and their familie may haue sufficient, and be mayntayned, and not seeke to hande and gather together infinite masses of treasure.

¶ Through slouthfulnes the balkes of the house decaye, and through Idle handes, it rayneth into the house.

Ye

HE addeth a prouerbiall sentence, as if he should saye. In such a kingdome where Princes and Peres seke their owne, and the king is a fole, it happeneth as to a negligent howseholder, who where he myght in tyme with one penny coste kepe his rafters from rotting, letteth it runne till the house be lyke to fall. Where therfore the householder is not diligent, and euery day repayring where decay is, here alwayes one damage and losse followeth an other. But a diligent body straight way repayreth a thing fallen in decay, & preserueth not onely that he hath, but alwaies amendeth where he seth faulte or breach, still making his house more and more comelye. And that he sayth of the house, he will haue vnderstanded of all thinges belonging to house keping. Euen as the building being neglected decayeth, so doth the house keeping decay being neglected. A diligent householder is alwayes increasing somewhat: a slouthfull and negligent, alwaies loseth somewhat. Thus many Bysshoprickes and Dukedomes haue decayed, because no man hath set his hand to the restoring of them. He that neglecteth that is small

Diligence cõmaūded, whether in publike or priuate gouernaunce.

by

by lytle and lyttle loseth all. An house-holder must be both a sparer and liberall, and he must make much of small things, that when tyme serueth he may be liberall, For many small maketh a great.

Frederike Duke of Saxony, a most laudable Prince.

Our Prince Fredericke a most praise worthy householder so ordered his house keeping, that he seemed a Niggard: for he payed all his seruauntes, Cookes and other their wages in their hand, but to those that came to his Court which were to be rewarded, he was most bountifull, which he should not haue bene able to do vnles at other tymes he had spared it. And thus he brought to passe, that he had a most well ordered house and familie. So Princes when they neglect one or two vserers, or other Malefactors, it cõmeth to passe at length that they punishe none at all, & so the whole cõmon weale falleth. So ỳ Romane Captaines would haue no enemye despised, were he of neuer so small force. To conclude, where the kinge is a foole, there is a foolish gouernement, & such a kingdome as must needes fall. For so is it in a kingdome, as in house keeping. And ỳ house to drop, is as much as to perish and decaye.

With

With laughing thei get their liuing,
and wyne maketh them meary.

THat is, these pestilent Gluttons and Coormarantes, haue no honest trade of lyfe, but get their wages and liuing onely by toyes and gaudes, by flattering and clawing men by the backe, by bolling and drinking, and thus they ware rich. Such are for the most parte in Princes Courtes. Yea amongest foure hundred, hers are scarce fower or fyue, which by honest meane and trade get their lyuing, and tender the common weale. Princes Courtes.

Wyne maketh them meary.

AS much as to say: they care for nothing but how they may lyue pleasauntly, they doe Princes no good, but spende their prouision, and charge them with nedeles expences.

But vnto mony all thinges are obedient.

WE in the Germane tong, properlye expresse it thus: All things be done for money. They loke all together for money and gaine, be it with or against ỹ common weale.

The eleuenth Chapiter.

Curse not the king in thy thought, nor the rich in thy bed chamber. for the foules of heauen shall carry thy voice, & they which haue wings shall bewraye it.

An exhortation to good workes.

THe Chapiter going before was a kynde of inuective agaynst fooles, and a discription of the kingdome of this worlde, what a kynde of thyng it is, so that whosoeuer beareth office, may know he hath a troublesome administration. And to knowe that the kingdome of this worlde is so troublesome and incorrigible, is the greatest wisedome that can be. Now this chapiter exhorteth to good workes: for whē men are taught how vniust the kingdom of this world is, then their hartes begin to ware weary, and they deuise how to geue vp all kinde of administration, and to forsake the world, being ouercommed with the malice of men, as was declared heretofore. But Salomon teacheth, that the more vnhappye and vngracious the worlde is, the more we should trauel and

indeuour

indeuour to doe some good.

And first he beginneth with honoring of the magistrate, for the magistrate is an ordinaūce of God, and the better part of the worlde vnder the Sunne: and by this ordinaunce God doth all thyngs that are done vnder the Sunne. But the wicked beginnes with cōtemning of the magistrates, because they heare in the scripture that God reprehendeth them: but it is Gods office to rebuke & repreue magistrates: and where thou heareſt God thus doe, thou must not follow him therin, for thou art not God, or any ordayner or restorer of godly ordinaunce: but as God repreueth thē, euē so repreueth he thee also in his scriptures, that thou also mightest doe thy duety, but thou forgetting the beame in thine owne eye, begynnest to espye a moate in an other mans eye, and reprehendest thy superiours, of whom thou oughtst rather to be reprehēded. For if thou wert in their office, thou wouldst commit farre more faultes then they, and wouldst not performe so much as they doe: let vs therefore heare how God rebuketh the magistrate, but not follow him in so doing.

I cōmaundement to honour the magistrate.

Euen euyll magistrates are to be honoured.

This therfore is his meaning, I haue sayd many things of of Princes how they destroy ỹ world: but doe not thou speake euill of the king within thy self, or in thy hart, nor of ỹ rich mã in thy secret chamber, ỹ is to say, men ỹ are in authority, must be reuerenced because it is no mãs ordinaũce, but Gods. For although Peter call the magistrate an ordinaunce of man, because they are taken from among men, yet is their power of God. And although they be euill men, yet are they to be honoured because of Gods ordinaũce. Why therefore wilt thou speake euill of thẽ which are troubled w̃ so many cares & trauailes for thy weale, if they be good men, and if they be euill men, their wickednesse is, and bringeth them euils inough. Beare with them therefore, but thus we doe not, yea the worlde doth the contrary, it rendereth vnkyndnesse to the good, it speaketh euill of others, it commendeth fooles, and maketh good men out of the way.

When alwayes impatient and discontent.

To conclude we can suffer neyther our selues, ne yet others, neither prosperitie, ns yet aduersitie. If God try vs with a litle affliction, with sickenesse, or pouerty,

we

we become impatient and accuse God, if he geue vs ouer to our owne desiers, neyther can we be so cõtent. It is a great patience of God that can beare with vs in so great vnthankfulnes. Let vs cease therfore to speake euill of ỹ magistrates, but geue them honour, whether they be good or bad, geue God thanks for them, if they be good: if they be euill, lament it and beare with them. And let the preachers rebuke them, and not the commõs.

For the foules of heauen shall carry thy voyce, and they which haue winges shall bewray it.

THe Hebrwes call a birde or foule, a man of wings or husband of feathers, or one that hath feathers. This he meaneth, if thou speake euill of the kyng, it shal not lie hidden but commeth to light, and so thou shalt be punished. For the wrath of ỹ king is death, but his louing fauour is as the euening dewe.

Cast thy breade vpon the waters, for after many dayes thou shalt finde it.

THis agayne is an Hebrew phrase, as

A cõmaundement to be liberall.

Salomõ aboundeth in such figures. This is it he would say: Be liberall to euery man while thou mayst, vse thy riches euery where, by pleasuring euery man. And he ioyneth a promise thereto: For if thou liue long, thou shalt receaue an hũdred folde. So in his prouerbes: He that hath pitie on the poore, lendeth vnto the Lord. So Christ also: Geue and it shall be geuen vnto you. And Paule: God loueth a chearefull geuer. He ỹ will be a begger, let him geue nothing to other men. He sayth therefore, Cast thy bread, that is, distribute & deale of that liuing which God hath geuen thée: vpon the waters, that is, geue boũtifully, and with a single eye, although it séeme to thée thine almes perish, and thy bread be throwen in the water. For Salomon vseth a metaphore, whereby he signifieth that thou being a man shouldst fede and nourishe man.

For after many dayes thou shalt finde it.

That is, if thou liue long thou shalt finde that bread that thou didst caste into the water, as though he should say:

it

it shall not be lost that thou geuest to o-thers, although it seeme so, yea the Lord will geue thee bread for a long season. Psal. 36. The righteous is euer mercifull and lendeth. Againe: In the time of dearth they shall haue plenty. For God will not suffer himselfe to be ouercommed in liberalitie, but will far passe and surmount our bounty and largesse.

Geue a portion to seuen and also to eight, for thou knowest not what euell shall be vpon earth.

HEre againe he exhorteth, and ioyneth a threatening to his exhortatiõ. Deuyde saith he thy breade among seuen or eight, that is geue plentifully. For he that soweth sparingly, shall reape sparinglye, He that soweth aboundantly shall reape aboundantlye. As Paule sayth: Thinke it not to much whatsoeuer thou geuest. And although ỹ shouldest giue all ỹ hast, yet shouldest thou not want, so that thou hast to geue, and gyuest of thine owne, as Christ sayth in his gospell.

The commaundemẽt of liberality repeated agayne.

Because thou knowest me, what euell. &c.

That is, it may come to passe, that to morrow thou shalt dye and leaue thy goodes to vnworthy mẽ, or els some other calamity may suddeinly fall, & then thou repent thee that thou didst not geue or bestowe thy goodes, and now being willing arte not able. Geue therefore thy goodes while thou haste them and art able: thou knowest not what wil afterwarde betide. For when Princes gather and masse vp infinite treasures, they doe but minister occasion of warres, and rich men doing ỹ lyke minister matter of lawe and contention.

¶ If the Cloudes be full, they will powre fourth rayne vpõ the earth.

These be meere exhortatiõs & threats. If the cloudes, that is the powre, be full, they will send downe rayne into ỹ earth. This may be vnderstanded two wayes. First thus: Doe as the cloudes doe, which when they are full, let ỹ raine fall: euen so doo thou, poure out vpon the powre. Secondly it may be a promise, which I lyke better, after this sorte. If thou hast substaunce geue it to thẽ, which be like wandring cloudes, and haue nothing

thing. Fill I ſay theſe cloudes, and thou ſhalt ſæ thy ſelfe alſo filled. The commination followeth.

¶ The tree whether it falleth to the South, or to the North, in the place that it falleth there it ſhall be.

A commination agaynſt Niggards.

That is, thou knoweſt not how longe thou ſhalt liue, and poſſeſſe thy goods. As a træ when it is cutt downe, whether it fall to the South, or to the North, remayneth there ſtill: ſo howſoeuer death taketh the, in whatſoeuer ſtate or condition, thou remayneſt in the ſame. If the Lorde finde thæ in the South, that is to ſay fruitefull, and rich in good workes, it is happye for thæ: If in the North, that is to ſay, with no good workes, woe to thæ. Howſoeuer thou ſhalt be founde, ſo thou ſhalt be iudged, ſo thou ſhalt receiue alſo.

He that obſerueth the wynde ſhall not ſowe, and he that regardeth the Cloudes ſhall not reape.

we muſt geue liberally.

This alſo apperteyneth to exhortatiõ. We in the Dutche tounge expreſſe this ſentence thus: He that is afrayde of

the bushes, must neuer come into the woodes or forrest. It seemeth to him ỳ geueth, that he shall leaue nothinge at home, but lose all. And this is the cause we geeue so vnwillingly. Therefore (sayth he:) If thou wilt feare penurye & ingratitude of men, thou shalt neuer be beneficiall. He that regardeth ỳ substance he geueth, more then the worde of ỳ promiser, beleeueth he shall not be nourished in tyme to come nor haue inough. Therfore loke vpon the worde and promises of God: Man lyueth not by bread onely. If thou wilt beleeue this worde, he will bleesse the in thee fælde, at home. &c.

He shall neuer be liberall that is voyde of fayth and feareth pouertie.

Therefore he soweth not ỳ regardeth the windes, nor reapeth, that obserueth the raine. For in the haruest raine is not good, but men loke for fayre wether, and reape not till that be come. I would geue gladly (say some) if I knew I should not lacke my selfe. Thou wilt gene onelye ỳ whereof thou hast no nede. But thou must know that the poore must eate with thee, so that thou shouldest rather somewhat defraude thy selfe, then he shoulde lacke. But he that beleeueth not the Lord will doo no good. He that omitteth his

worde

worde, will omitt his worke alſo.

As thou knoweſt not which is the waye of the Spirites, nor how the bones doe growe in the wombe of her that is with Childe: So thou knoweſt not the worde of God that worketh all,

SAlomon vſeth this copiouſnes of exhortation, to awake and ſtyrre vp our ſlouthfulnes: Euen (ſayth he) as thou knoweſt not the waye of the winde, and how the bones are ioyned together &c: euen ſo thou knoweſt not the worke that God doth euery where or in all mē. Thou knoweſt not what God will determine of thy ſelfe, or of any other, whether thou ſhalt lyue or dye to morrowe, whether thou ſhalt be ſicke, or haue any other myſhapp. If God would haue prolonged our lyfe and our dayes, ſo that we might haue knowē how long, we woulde haue bæne the wooreſt Creatures on the earth. But now know we not whether we ſhall lyue one howre, and yet we wil not ceaſe our euill doing. This ſimilitude Chriſt vſeth in the thirde of Saynte Iohn: Thou heareſt the blowing of

Becauſe our life is vncerteine, we muſt be liberall.

the

the wynde, and yet thou knoweſt not whēce it cōmeth, nor whether it will, and no more knoweſt thou whether thou ſhalte goe. As therefore thou fæleſt the wynde preſent, ſo vſe thou thy preſent goodes.

And how the bones be ioyned together.

The workes of God be vnknowen to vs.

LIkewiſe (ſaith he) are beaſtes and men made in their mothers wombe, thou knoweſt not how. Pſal. 38. My bones are not hid from thee though I be made ſecretly. ¶ in all that Pſalme of *Domine probaſti. &c.* And though the wombe were opened, yet could we not ſæ how theſe thinges came to paſſe. For we all ſæ that træes doe growe, and yet we ſæ not how the bowes, leaues and fruites of them doe grow, neither can we ſhewe any reaſon thereof. Euen ſo other men ſæ that we growe. Seing therefore we vnderſtand not thinges preſent and before our eies, how ſhall we vnderſtand things to come. To cōclude, Gods workes are to vs vnknowen, and ſo are thoſe things that are to come.

He that made thee, will feede thee.

In the morning ſowe thy ſeede, and

in

in the euening let not thine hand rest: For thou knowest not whether shall prosper this or that, or whether both shall be alyke good.

He speaketh not this of tyllage onely, but generally of all the woorkes of man, and chiefly of doing good woorkes as Paule sayth: Let vs doo good while we haue time. In the morning, that is, betimes or alway. The reason is, because ỹ knowest not which will soonest grow. Cast thou thy sæde in ỹ ground, and doe that thou oughtest, and then commit all thy labour ǂ successe hereof to God. Doe wel vnto all men, marke not the windes, nor care not for that is to come. Thus must we doe our good woorks, ǂ not looke for our thankes here. If the world doth giue no thankes, God thanketh, if both cometh to passe so much is it the better. And if Daungers ensue, receiue them thankfully.

He repeateth his former exhortations and comforters.

We sæ therefore in all this booke that Salomon teacheth vs to vse the thinges present that God sendeth, and armeth vs against daũgers and calamities to come, that when they light we take them not as straunge. That that followeth is a

kinde

kinde of wish or prayer such as we vse in our sermons and exhortations, in Dutch on this wyse: woulde to God it went so to woorke.

Light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes, to see the Sunne.

THis is an allegory, he meaneth it were a pleasant thing, if a mã would expresse this doctrine in lyfe: If the Princes and people would folow this doctrine which I haue taught & doe teach in this booke.

Though a man lyue many yeares, and in them all reioyce, yet he shall remember the dayes of darkenes, because they are many, all that commeth is vanitie.

A man shal scarce finde one yͤ hath liued mearyly all the dayes of his lyfe.

THis is a very comprecation or prayer as I sayd, lyke as he should saye: that age would I faine see that had obserued the contentes of this booke, the same were an excellẽt man. Looke how pleasaunt & ioyfull the Sun & light is, so pleasaunt a thing it is to see a man many yeares inured with the experience of these matters, & yet meary at his hart,

and

and conteyning all worldly Daungers. He should see in deede much darkenes, ỹ is, mysteries of this worlde. But this should delight him, that he could set them lighter, as one knowing and perceiuing long before, that this were the state and trade of the worlde.

The xii. Chapiter.

Be meary therfore O young man in thine youth, and let thine hart be glad in thine young daies.

He exhorteth youth, to enioy their goods mearyly & in the feare of God.

After that he hath described a rare kinde of byrde, namely such a man as hath lyued all his life with a meary harte, and hath laughed at the troubles & malice of the world, then he ioyneth to a kinde of exhortation: Thou young man therefore (sayth he) that hast little experience of the world, if thou wilt lyue mearely, harken what I write for the, and teach thee, that thou passe not thy boũdes. Liue so as thou mayst contemne ỹ world and ouercome the naughtines thereof. And here maist thou see what Salomon calleth contempt of the world, not to forsake our selues, or other men, but to be

conuersaunt

conuersaunt in the worlde, in the myddle of the broyles thereof, but so as we must kæpe, a quyet and peaceable harte in all maner of aduersities. This it is therefore that he saith: If thou wilt attaine to this gole or marke to haue a quiet hart, in the myddle of all troubles, enure thy selfe with troubles, & that from thy childhode: For so shalt thou safelie stand al stormes and daungers.

Let thyne hart be glad.

How youth should be brought vp.

That is, take prosperitie mearyly when it commeth, and be not ouercommed of aduersitie, when God sendeth it. Thus should youth be brought vp and instructed. And vnles youth follow such an admonisher, he shall neuer doe lyke a man. For youth is ledde altogether with affections, & is vnskilfull, which vnskilfulnes is cause ỳ it cã not beare nor yelde hereafter to the naughtines and ingratefulnes of the world. Salomon therefore is an excellent instructer of youth. He forbiddeth not ioyes and pleasauntnes, as the foolishe masters the Monkes haue done. For this is nothing els but of yoũg men to make blockes. And as Anselme

the

the veryest Monke of all other sayd: to set a great tree in a litle pot. Thus these Monkes shut vp their youth in a coupe, and forbid them the sight and communication of men, because they should learne nor perceaue nothing, where as nothing is more daungerous for youth, then solytarines.

The mynde must be well infourmed wyth good vnderstanding and opinions, that it be not corrupted wyth the compa- ny and familiaritie of naughty men, but the body must be conuersaunt in euery thing. We must beholde the world, and heare it, onely see that we haue a good maister and teacher. Therefore we must beware that youth be not in sorrow and solitarines. For myrth is as necessary for youth as meate and drinke. For the body doth battel through mirth of minde. And we must not beginne with the education of the body, but with the mynde that it be not corrupted. Whē the minde is well taught and enfourmed, there the body is sone well gouerned. We must therfore beare with youth to be meary, and to doe all thinges with gladsomnes of hart: onely we must take hede that

The mindes of youth must be well instructed.

they be not corrupted with the pleasures of the flesh. For these quaffinges, surfetting, and amourousnes, are not the myrth of the mynde that Salomon here speaketh of, but rather the sorrow of the same.

Walke in the wayes of thyne hart,

We must enioy the goods that God geueth vs, with feare of ỹ Lord.

THys place caused me to thinke that all this Chapiter from the beginning was but a kynde of derision and scorne, because if a man walke after the wayes of his owne hart, it is commōly taken in euill part. But we must sticke to the argument and consequēce of the text. This it is then that he sayth: when thine hart is well taught and enstructed, no ioy or myrth shall be able to hurt it, so that it be lawfull ioye, and no such naughty and wofull myrth, as I spake of before.

And walk in the sight of thine eyes

THat is to say, enioy that, that cōmeth to thy sight. Vexe not thy selfe about thinges to come, least thou doe as the Monkes doe, of whom there were some, namely, Syluanus the Monke, which taught men they shoulde not loke vpon

the

the Sunne. They woulde bereue youth of their sight, of hearing, of taulking, & all their senses, and shut them vp lyke Capons into a coupe, being in deede vngodly, and ỹ true Misanthropi, that is, haters of men. Therefore if thou see or heare any pleasaunt matter, enioy it, so thou offend not agaynst God. Appoint or prescribe thy selfe no rules in this behalfe, but enioy euery thing, in the feare of God. Se thou follow not the peruerse pleasures of the worlde, which will corrupt thy mynde. Thus far, for one part.

Put away greefe out of thyne hart, and cause euill to depart from thy flesshe: for childehode and youth are vanitie.

IT is as much as if he should say: euen as I would haue thee stayed by ỹ feare of God from following filthy & noysome pleasures: so woulde I keepe thee from being ouercommed with sorrowes and aduersitie. Put sorrow therefore out of thy mynde, that is, vse not to be angry, nor to conceaue indignation, whē things goe not as thou desirest. If any sad or sorrowfull matter fall, know that it is the

Fret not agaīst god, though aduersitie fall, and be not ouercōmed with voluptuousnes.

state of this world. Let other enuy, hate, and fret at it, but doe not thou. For such doinges marre the pleasaunt lyfe, according to the prouerbe: Enuie is the rotting of the bones. For enuye is a fretting and a consuming sicknes. Let thine hart alwayes be one, neyther doe thou corrupt it with ouermuch worldly pleasures, ne yet wyth too many worldly griefes. &c.

Put away euill from thy flesshe.

Sorow must be put away.

That is, whatsoeuer may vexe or trouble thee, put from thee, not that he forbiddeth man to chasten his flesshe, but in vayne (saith he) doost thou vexe thy selfe, while ỹ letteſt such thinges trouble thee. Frowne not at these matters therefore, but be of meary cheare: Onely see ỹ thou feare God. For a meary countenaunce declareth a meary hart. And euen as I will haue thee to be meary in mynde, so will I thou be also cherefull of body.

For childehode and youth. &c.

Temperance & modestie must be obserued.

That is, remember thou art young, and set all together in the way of vanitie. For youth of it selfe is a vayne thing,

thing, and led with sundry and diuers passions. Be thou wise therfore, and put not oyle into the fier, as the prouerbe sayth: Be thou neyther in loue, ne yet in sadnes, be meary and enioy thy goods. And vse thy selfe hereto in thy youth, that thou mayst know how to doe in thine age. For they that liue quietly and pleasauntly in their youth, shall come also vnto a pleasaunt age.

¶ Remember thy Creator now in thine youth, before the euell dayes come, & the yeares approch: where in thou shalt say, I haue no pleasure in them.

ALl these thinges say I vnto thee, because I would haue thee free from all youthly affections, that thou mayst feare God, and vse those thinges which he geueth thee, Before the euell dayes come, that is, before thou ware olde. For age of it selfe is a sicknes, although it haue none other dysease beside. For olde men lose the strength of mynde and body both. He describeth age by many wordes and figures, and how age hath nothing but euell dayes, and is vnprofitable to be en-

He exhorteth youth to feare God.

tangled with busynes.

Whiles the sonne is not darke, nor the light, nor the Moone, nor the Starres, nor the Cloudes, returne after the rayne.

A description of age.

Light signifieth felicitie, darkenes, affliction, and miserye, as where it is sayd, A light is risen vp in darknes, to them that be true of harte. This he meaneth: Before the infelicitie and misfortune of age come, when neyther the sunne shall be pleasaunt to thee, nor the light delighteth thee. There the cloudes returne after the rayne, that is to saye there is a continual entercourse of tribulation and sadnes. In other ages, as in youth and myddle age &c. there is a kinde of enterchaungeable myrth, and after a tempest cometh cleare weather, & after sadnes myrth. But in olde men, after cloudes come rayne. One mischaunce vpon another, one foule weather vpó an other. And thus the Poetes called age, sad, or heauye.

K

¶ When the Reapers of the house shall tremble.

These

THese are descriptions and very pictures of age. This he meaneth. Acquaint thy selfe to beare aduersitie, liue in the feare of God, before the kæpers of the house tremble or shake, that is, before thine handes tremble. For the handes are the Protectours of the body, as Aristotle calleth the hand the instrument of instruments. Because it serueth so many vses, namely, all the members, wherein all other membres haue their distinct and seuerall offices and duetyes. For our body is lyke as it were an house, wherein a man may beholde a president both of publicke and priuate gouernment, the kinge of which publicke gouerment is the hed, and the hands are ỹ kæpers, or garde. &c. The handes the garde of the body.

* And the strong men shall bowe themselues.

THat is, when the legges and knées shall ware faint, and yelde. For vnto the bones and legges is attributed the strength of man, as in the Psalme. The Lord hath no pleasure in the strength of a mans legges. The legs.

When the Grinders shall cease, be-

cause they are fewe.

The teeth. OLde age is toothles. The teethe are the grinders of the meate, and the mouth is as the Mill. There is euell grinding where the teeth be fallē out.

¶ And they waxe darke that looke out at the wyndowes.

The eyes. THat is, whē ỹ eyes ware to be dimme of sight. For age hath no cleare sight, by reason that the strength of all senses in olde men is diminished.

And the streat dores be shut without, & the base sounde of the grinding waxe weake.

The mouth and lippes. THat is, when the mouth and chawes hang downe, and are not fast. For the mouth is the doore of the hart. Math. 17. Out of the hart procede. &c. The throte shutteth in the voyce making it small. Thus the dores are shutt. For the two lippes are the dores or gate, out of the which our hart commeth forth, euen as by a doore into the streate. This doore in olde men is shutt, because they can not singe, hallowe, and speake out, yea they can scarse drawe their breath.

The voyce.

When

When they ſhall ryſe at the peping of the byrde, and all the daughters of ſinging ſhall waxe fainte.

THat is, they ſhall not onely ſpeake with much paine, but hardely catch any ſleape. For by reaſon of the dryneſſe of humors in olde men, ỹ rote and cauſe of ſleape is taken away. For ſleape hath his feeding of the humors in man. Olde men therefore are awaked with euery litle chirping of a byrde: where younge men ſleape lyke hogges, and though the Cockes do crowe, the Dogges doe barke or it thunder, they ſleape ſtill: Sleepe.

The daughters of ſinging.

ARe bothe the eares. It is an hebrewe phraſe, as the Sonne of helpe, of light of darkenes, as hath beene declared heretofore. So the eares are called, the daughters of ſinging, that is, they that are buſied in hearing of ſonges. Theſe daughters of ſinging ware fainte or weake: They become weake and feble. &c. that is, Olde mens eares ware deaf, they delight not in muſicke. The eares.

When the height ſhalbe afrayed, &

feare in the waye.

The head-shaking or trembling.

That is, the olde man shall goe stowping with shoulders and head. For the head and shoulders are the heigth of the body. This heigth feareth, that it wareth crooked. This he meaneth, olde men go fearefully in euery place because they goe hanging downe their head and shoulders, as they vse that are afrayed.

¶ When the Almonde Tree shall florish.

whyte head.

That is, when the head wareth white. For the Almond træ of all others beareth whitest flowers. Of this florishing Almond træ, he borowoth his metaphor of hoary Age.

✻ When the Grashopper shall be a burthen.

Leannesse and bones sticking out.

That is, such an olde man is lyke to a grashopper. The whole bodie is nothing but skinne, and bone. For his bones sticke out, and his body is worne away. And so he is become a very Image and Counterfet of death.

When pleasure and delight abateth

For

For thus had I lieffer to enterpretate the hebreiue worde: for he vnderstandeth not the venerous pleasure, which chiefly in olde men is ceased, but also all other kinde of lawfull & honest pleasure, as if he should saye: An olde man taketh delight in nothing, but is vnfitt to all such purposes. There is no pleasaunt taulke or familiaritye with him, but he is euen a liuing corps. Thou sæst therefore that he speaketh here of decrepite Age, good for nothing, not of such age as is able yet to be occupied in such businesses. Lothsomnes of meat and drinke.

For man shall goe into the house of his age, and the mourners shall goe about in the streat.

He entermedleth a place which enforceth me to vnderstand this chapter of age. This he meaneth: It remayneth ỹ man must goe to the house of his eternitie, that is, to his graue. For the graue is the house of his eternitie or worlde, because he goeth thyther and returneth not againe: yet we mourne and bewaile him thus going to his graue, With houling, and mourning is he brought to his graue. Serue God therfore before thou The burryall & graue.

ware olde, for then there remayneth nothing, but that thou must be carryed to the graue.

Before the siluer corde be taken away, and the golden Ewer broken.

Nutrimēt, or foode. That is before thine eating and drinking slake, which is cōpared to a siluer corde, and to a rundlet of golde, or wheele, or ringe of golde. For as a wheele or circle runneth about and commeth to his circle againe: So meate and drinke alwaies returne, and are in deede lyke to a siluer string, because our lyfe hangeth, and dependeth on them.

Before the Pytcher be broken at the well, and the wheele at the Cesterne

Breath and lyfe. That is before thy breath and lyfe faile thee. Our body is lyke to a pitcher, which hath alwayes neede of reparation. The whele vpon the cesterne, is the stomacke and other members, which giue instrument to the body.

And the dust returne to the earth, as it was in the beginning.

Salomon hath a respect to the place of

Genesis

Geneſis. 2. Chapiter: as if he ſhould ſay, After death duſt returneth to earth as it was before. We were all duſt, therefore when we dye, we returne to duſt, as we were before. The body returneth to duſt.

And the ſpirit returne to God that gaue it.

AND here alſo he hath reſpect to an other place of Gene. in the ſame chapter. The Lorde God breathed into the face of man, breath of lyfe. He appointeth not whether the ſpirit goeth, but ſaith it returneth to God from whence it came. For as we know not whereof God made the ſpirit: euen ſo we know not whether it goeth. The ſpirit returneth to God.

Vanitie of vanities ſayth the Preacher, and all is but vanitie.

HE concludeth hys booke with the ſame ſaying, wherewith he begonne it, and addeth a cõmendation to his doctrine, and an exhortation, that we ſhould not be led about with ſtraunge and diuers learninges, but abide in that, that hath beene taught vs. For this is a great miſery that when God hath ſett vp his A grieuous compaynt of the miſerie of mans lyfe.

worde

worde and good teachers, by and by start vp heretikes and wicked teachers, which through emulatiō draw the pe[illegible] after thē. Thus all the Apostles ca[illegible] to keepe vs in holsome doctrine. [illegible] thys peruersenes is the holsome doctrine and worde of God compelled to beare: when God rayseth vp his worde, in come heretikes, and Apes, that will counterfet hys word. Moses appointed a seruice for god and certeine Ceremonies, and forthwith certeine Apes erected Idols. Thus in all Artes and Sciences it commeth to passe: If there be a good Poet, he wanteth not his zoili: If there be a good Artificer, there will be counterfets to follow hym. Thus all Artes haue their imitators, that is, their destroyers. But this of all other is the worst, that the multitude foloweth these fooles, and preferre them before the true Artificers, as Christ sayd of them: They shall deceaue many. This is it that Salomon in this place complaineth on.

This Preacher was not onely wyse, but also taught the people knowledge: he was very diligent, sought forth

forth and gathered together many Parables.

THat is, this preacher gaue himſelfe altogither to teach the people truely, but it ſucceeded not, nor followed. He was a very diligent man, he ſought how to ſet all thinges in good order, he was diligent in teaching. He appointed & ordered many thinges in excellent wyſe, but where are they that liſten to hym, and receaue his learning? There followeth no more fruite but wordes. For eyther he hath no hearers, or els wicked teachers and peruerters ſucceede. The dutie of Preachers.

He ſought to finde out pleaſaunt wordes, and vprightly to write the worde of trueth.

THat is, he laboured to profit mē with holeſome and worthy wordes, or as Paule ſpeaketh it, with wordes worthy of all acceptation, and he truly wrote the wordes of trueth. He did not wrappe or folde them vp in darknes, as theſe imitators doe, who by reaſon they vnderſtande not thinges rightly, can not teach rightly. For Ariſtotle ſayth, it is a tokē that a man hath knowledge, that can

teach

teach well. And Demosthenes being demaunded how a man should teach well, aunswered, if he spake nothing, but that he knew and vnderstoode well. For he that hath good vnderstãding, is able well to teach. And this is a commendation of the author, as if he should say: he taught very well and plainely, in so much that by his booke, a man may vnderstand, what to thinke, what to take in hand, what to doe, or to leaue vndone.

The wordes of the wyse are lyke goades, and like nayles fastened by the masters of the Assemblies, and geuen by one Pastour.

He exhorteth vs to abyde in the true and holesome doctrine of the church.

HEre he erhorteth vs that we be not led about with diuers and straunge doctrines, as if he should say: you haue a notable master and teacher, beware therfore of new teachers. For the wordes of this master, are goades and nayles, that is, they are planted and set fast. They be fastened. Such are the words of Dauid and of the Prophets: The words of the inconstant wauering mẽ be as skũme vpon the water. And of this place I coniecture there were certeine bookes and

histories

histories, and to digeste them into certeine annalles and Chronicles of the Hebrewes, and to compacte all other bookes in order, thereby to purchase authoritie vnto the bookes, and to ratifie and allow those that were worthy to be read.

So there are many authors that haue written Bibles: But of them all those onely are receaued and allowed, which at this day we call ỳ Bible. This it is therfore that he would say: Take hæde my sonne, that thou stick fast to those bookes that are receaued, as for other, set them at naught, because these wyse men haue set them at naught. For it commeth to passe, that when one good booke is set forth, ten other euil be set forth again, as may be seene in our dayes. But ỳ words of ỳ wyse are firme & true, which a man may take holde on. For they are nailes fastened, they haue their authoritie of the men of the congregation. Other bookes are not lyke them.

We must keepe to the bookes receaued, and allowed by God.

But are geuen by one Pastour.

That is to say, one kyng being Pastour, hath appointed wisemen to peruse and allow bookes. These men in this

The sonne of God the onely shepeheard of the Church.

booke haue acknowledged the holy ghost, and allowed it to be had of the people. Thus were the Gospelles receaued and allowed of the Fathers, that is, the Fathers acknowledged the holy Ghost to be in them. Now we must not hereof inferre, therefore the Church or Fathers are aboue the Gospelles: As it followeth not, I know God to be the true and liuing God, and his worde, Ergo I am aboue God and his worde. As he is not aboue the Prince that acknowledgeth the Prince, nor aboue his father that acknowledgeth his father: euen so in this. These men teach not this Pastour, but receaue of our Pastour. So I make a difference among bookes, and say, this Epistle is Apostolike, and this is not. Now, this is nothing els but to beare witnes vnto the trueth. Now followeth the exhortation.

The church is the piller and witnes of ỹ trueth.

¶ Of other bookes beside these my sonne take thou heede.

That is, followe those bookes, which are allowed of them that haue the holy ghoste, and haue acknowleoged them to be geuen, of one master and Pastour.

For

¶ For there is none ende in making of bookes.

HEre he toucheth the infelicitie of mās nature, seeming to imitate and followe these good men and wryters, but full vntowardly & vnhandsomely. This he meaneth. Thou hast to doe in ỹ world where thou shalt happē on innumerable bookes, set out to edifie the people, but abyde thou within a certen numbre of thē prescribed: And hold thy selfe vpon the scripture. The inconuenience of many bookes writing.

Much study and reading, is a wearines of the flesshe.

THis he saith not of the wearynes of the person that wryteth but of his disciples or hearers, as if he would saye. These men with their many wrytinges and bookes doe nothing but cause men to weary themselues, whō yet they would seeme to benefit, allwayes learning, and neuer attayning vnto the truth. This I say is the fruite of these bookes. to trouble mens consciences, and to wearye ỹ people Therefore we must persist and abyde in the opinion of one Teacher. We must One maister to be followed.

cleaue either to one, for to a fewe which haue the trewe forme of doctrine. Other we must beware of, which go about onely to seeme to bring some newe deuyse, and to seeme better learned then others, as nowe many Sectaryes, and their likes dw. Well therefore doth S. James saye: Be ye not many maisters.

Let vs heare the ende of all, feare God, and keepe his commanndementes.

The sume of the doctrine of this booke, comprehending all worshyp and feare of God, fayth, and good workes.

That is, this is the sume of all, feare God and worshipp him, and set hym alwayes before thine eyes: and so shalt thou performe all I haue written in this booke. For vnlesse a man feare God, he can accomplishe none of these thinges. He hath set forth the examples of them which haue lyued wisely and notablye without feare, who when aduersitie and distresse commeth, ware insolent and trouble themselues. But they that feare the Lorde can contemne and set light all aduersityes & troubles, when they come, & giue God thankes whē they come not.

¶ For this is the dutie of all men.

That

THat is, belongeth to all men and is profitable for all mē. By other trades and kindes of lyfe, men seeke for gayne, by this for godlynesse. The same Paule affirmeth in this wise: These thinges be profitable for men. As for vaine talke auoyde.

For God wil bring euery worke vnto iudgement, with euery secreat thing, whether it be good or euell.

THat is, all thinges at length shall come vnto iudgement. Be they good, or be they euil, vaine talkers, backbiters, fooles at length shall be confounded, and their opinions shall no lenger endure. Thus zoilus at length was throwen downe aliue from ẏ topp of a mountaine. But Homer abydeth the Prince of all Poetes still in despight of all the zoili, or of whosoeuer is more wicked then they. Thus all other good authors, especially of the sacred Scriptures, by Gods power and appoyntment, are likewyse hetherto preserued.

¶ With euery secret thinge.

THat is to saye, hypocrisie. Because

these Apes counterfet a shewe of lyfe and good doctrine. So in the 25. Psalme also it is sayd. I will not keepe companye with dissemblers, that is, such as Christ calleth hipocrites. Paule sayth: They haue a shewe of Godlines. Therefore God shall Iudge euery worke, that that may remayne and abyde, that is perfect and sincere, all coulors & fainednes being taken away wherewith they hid and cloked their workes. He speaketh not of the latter iudgment, but after the maner of ỹ Scripture in generall of all iudgments, eyther such as heretikes be iudged and put to death by, or what so euer sorte of wicked persons. All these thinges haue their iudgment and time appointed them of God which they muste abyde. Thus the Pope euen at this day is brought to iudgement, & is almost condẽned. Thus was Arius and diuerse other heretikes, brought to this iudgment, and the Lorde reueled their shamefullnes as Peter saith: In the time of his visitation and inquirie.

FINIS.